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ABSTRACT

Ten articles by community college faculty of the State University of New York on instruction-related topics make up this annual publication. First, Harold Cantor argues that the future of community colleges hinges on the development of a cadre of generalists who will foster general education. After the Life Skills Program of Rockland Community College is described by Barbara Viniar in terms of its application of adult development theory, Nancy Jacobs Grossman reviews student activities programs in light of curriculum structure. Next, Robert H. Gould examines the cooperative education program of Tompkins Cortland Community College. Following Shirley Lim's discussion of writing poetry as a means of teaching poetry, the barriers to the integration of foreign students into the social structure of a community college are examined by Howard C. Himelstein. Next, Ann Catalano-Broughton considers career guidance for the media major, and Joan Silberman describes a structural approach to teaching English composition. After a course revision process for reading/study skills courses is explained by Diane Creel and Marlene Blumin, Harold Ettelt reviews the bibliographic instruciton program at Columbia-Greene Community College. (LAL)

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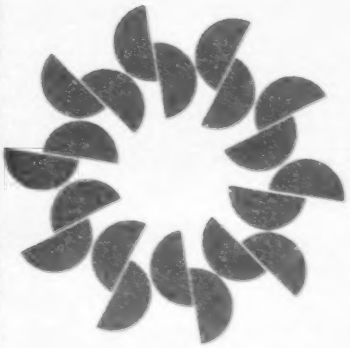

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by faculty of the
community colleges
of the State University of New York

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FOREWARD

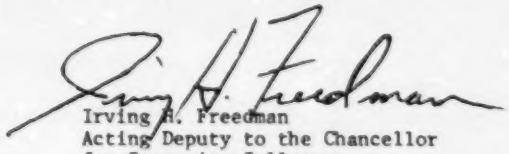
Insight was at its inception in 1977 and remains the only publication of its kind in the nation--a collective sharing of instructionally-related thoughts by faculty of a statewide system of community colleges. Numerous requests for copies of the journal and inquiries about its editorial policy indicate to us that it is not the only one because someone in Albany insists on an annual call for papers, but because of the worth and usefulness of the ideas presented.

In the lead article of Insight, 1981-82, Marvin Feldman, President of the Fashion Institute of Technology, described the U.S. community college as a "priceless social utility." Over the years, Insight has done much to reveal the truth of this label.

The publication has offered nearly 100 different articles by SUNY community college faculty and staff. The breadth and flexibility of these institutions are evidenced by the fact that no two articles are alike and seldom has a subject matter been dealt with more than once. As actual and real community resources, community colleges shift and alter to meet local citizen needs--this mission of inventive response results in dozens of varied educational services. In the fast-changing world of community college education, an annual like Insight is somewhat of a necessity. Such a sharing of notions is essential.

Financial and editorial support for Insight comes from a unique combination of sources. The SUNY Faculty Council for Community Colleges, the statewide representative advisory organization for the faculty of the thirty SUNY community colleges, promotes the publication, provides the editorial board and financially supports production of the book. Financial support also comes from the Chancellor's Innovative Fund of the SUNY Research Foundation and from the State of New York. Editorial coordination, including typesetting, is handled by the SUNY Central Administration Office for Community Colleges. Layout is done by the SUNY Central Graphics Office. Insight is printed at the University's Central Print Shop. We are grateful to all for their leadership and assistance, but most of all for their commitment to the idea.

I do hope that Insight, 1982-83 is of much good use to you.



Irving H. Freedman
Acting Deputy to the Chancellor
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VANISHING GENERALISTS:
CAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES SURVIVE WITHOUT THEM?

by Harold Cantor
Head, English-Humanities Department
Mohawk Valley Community College

"Sometimes a person has to go a very long distance out of his way to come back a short distance correctly" according to playwright Edward Albee. I wish to discuss the state-of-the-art of general education in two-year college, explain what I mean by my title and offer what I believe to be a positive solution to a serious problem, a possible first-step in the right direction. But I can't do any of this without reviewing the problems facing community colleges in the early eighties, familiar problems which have to be met head on.

The peculiar institution known as the community college is a paradox, and perhaps it always was. Certainly in their "town and gown" sense, the two words community and college are antithetical. Yoked together, these words belie the ancient antagonism between the medieval town and the university; they represent a modern concept that there can be a productive union of the active and the contemplative. This concept has taken root worldwide, most notably in the United States where in 1980, 1,250 "two-year" colleges were serving nine million students, or one-third of the total enrollment in postsecondary education. Currently, these colleges, along with other sectors of higher education, are beset by a host of problems: externally, the shrinking pool of entering high school students; the dire demographic projections; the bleak economic forecasts; the cuts in financial aid; fiscal austerity in operating and capital funds; competition between public and private, upper- and lower-division institutions. Internally, the adversarial nature of collective bargaining, the poor preparation of many students for college work, the freeze in faculty mobility and lack of incentives for curriculum change and professional development. It is a bleak picture and some economists, such as D. W. Breneman and S. C. Nelson, are predicting an altered or diminished role for community colleges in the mid-eighties.[1] These institutions may have reached a period of maximum growth, if not of social utility.

The most vexing problem community colleges face is whether to limit their comprehensive role and mission. All four-year and graduate universities, indeed, most large corporate entities, must grapple with similar problems of scope and self-definition, but the public two-year college's dilemma springs from divided loyalty to its three funding sources: student tuition, county or school district taxpayer support and state funding. Remaining responsive to all three support systems, community colleges have developed an astonishing array of curricula and services and have extolled flexibility in faculty and administrators as a cardinal virtue. Their programs can be classified as career (both certificate and degree); collegiate; compensatory and community education--a schema followed by Arthur M. Cohen and Florence Brower in their latest book The American Community College[2]. The instructors at these institutions have experimented with a variety of teaching techniques, learning modes and delivery systems. Team-teaching, individualized instruction, TV courses, computer-assisted instruction, cognitive mapping, mastery learning--all these are terms known to venturesome faculty at many institutions. There is hardly a veteran teacher who at some time in his career has not had to plan a three-hour, once-per-week evening course or driven crosstown to teach in a large company's meeting room or a YMCA classroom.

The great strength of the community college--the pride that could goeth before its fall--is that it remains primarily a teaching institution. Its faculty are neither evaluated for their contributions to original research nor are they expected to publish regularly to be promoted. Most faculty believe they are good, even excellent instructors, and report that they are student-oriented. In addition, though they complain continually about working conditions, the mental limitations of the administration and the students, most of them like their jobs (the sources of these bald assertions may be found in Confronting Identity; The Two-Year College Instructor Today; The Humanities in Two-Year Colleges; The Faculty in Review--all by Cohen and Brower[3]).

Given its flexibility and hydra-headed

Dr. Cantor's article appeared in Perspectives, the journal of the Association for General and Liberal Studies, Fall, 1982, (Volume 12, No. 3) pages 4-12.

mission, and the pressures it faces from within and without, the community college is today becoming a teaching center where anything and everything is taught--from remedial arithmetic to children's theater, from Solar Energy Technology to Beverage and Bartending Management. Though it has developed an infrastructure of divisions to correspond with its diverse functions, community college offerings are subject to the whim of the individual consumer, the supply of and demand for skilled labor required by local industry and service organizations and the regulations of Federal, State and certifying agencies which police the professions and legislate or lobby for legal standards for qualified practitioners.

Some will argue that the mission of the two-year college was never narrowly focused and that, like Topsy, it just grew. Educational historians point out that it began as an institution which offered a two-year university-parallel program but that the transfer function has dwindled during the last decade to the point where most state systems estimate that only five percent of total enrollment (body count) does, in fact, transfer to upper-division schools. (These figures are deceptive since counting full-time equivalent enrollment and career transfers would have to yield a higher percentage; unfortunately no uniform system of reporting transfer data exists nationwide.) While it is mind-boggling to learn from G. R. Kissler's Report to the California Regents that the University of California is now ". . .sending more students to community colleges than they send to us,"[4] such a situation may not be typical of other less publically-oriented, stratified systems in states with less mobile citizens. Nevertheless, all reliable data points to a shrinkage in student enrollment nationwide in liberal arts and sciences, transfer curricula and a steady growth in career programs. Vocational-technical courses now account for more than 60% of total enrollment, while community service enrollments, which are difficult to measure because of part-time and nonmatriculated enrollment and other variables, has climbed in the period of 1975-80 to nearly four million.[5] In addition, compensatory education is booming: Cohen and Brower point out, that in 1977, about three in eight English classes at two-year colleges were presented at below-college level and that nearly one in three mathematics classes are taught arithmetic at a level lower than college algebra. These startling statistics must be coupled with the "drop-in, drop-out" behavior of the student body which I have characterized elsewhere.[6]

All this suggests that the comprehensive community college, in its efforts to respond to diverse needs, may be attenuating its effectiveness and is in danger of losing its identity as a college; it must maintain the educative dimension which makes for a purposeful collective educational enterprise without sacrificing its flexibility and commitment to open access.

For a long time, some of us, who have worked for the past ten or twenty years in the community college movement, have regarded general education as the glue that holds the disparate pieces together; indeed, we argue that a strong general education program can provide the common denominator which will keep us a college, counterbalancing the trend toward narrow vocationalism on the one hand and individualistic consumerism on the other. We think it can contain within it elements of compensatory education but that as the elementary and secondary educational systems face the challenges of 21st century literacy, remedial education will assume a subordinate role. Let me hasten to add that not all community college professionals share these sentiments. The automative and drafting tech instructors, when they think of general education, think of "service" courses which will help their students write concise and coherent estimates and reports and explain clearly complex mechanisms and measurements to the uninformed client or customer. The humanist, too, may think of general education as a "Survey of Western Civilization," certainly a necessary and humanizing experience initiating a student, an important rite of passage which leads toward more complex (hence, more stimulating) courses in literature and philosophy.

Part of the disparity lies in the term, general education, which is so difficult to define that one is tempted to adopt Mayhew's simplistic statement: "General Education is that part of the college curriculum which is deemed essential for the education of all students, and, therefore, should be required of all students."[7] Somehow that sounds authoritarian and vague at the same time. Miami-Dade, a leader in what has come to be known as the General Education Reform Movement, put it thus: "General Education assumes that ways can be found to bring essential knowledge together and that there is a common core of skills, understanding and attributes which our enlightened citizenry should have. Thus, the term refers to those phases of nonspecialized and non-vocational education that should be the common denominator of educated persons as individuals and a citizens in a free society."[8]

That is a better--though no less vague--definition, defining general education by what it is not. One can also distinguish between liberal education and general education--the former is primarily conceived of as knowledge for its own sake and for inner growth, while the latter is regarded as knowledge for power, for coping with the self and society.

Often general education is coupled with the idea of freedom and responsibility in a democracy; the term has a Dewey-like pragmatic connotation that contrasts with the platonic idealistic associations often attached to liberal education.

From the viewpoint of community college internal politics, general education is a far more acceptable term than liberal education. For one thing, it does not anger the conservative faculty or suggest that only liberal arts courses can be liberating. For another, it attracts support from every constituency in the college--not unanimously of course--but from the teacher who is student- and college-oriented, from the professor who is not solely intent upon teaching

his discipline but is concerned with the entire teaching-learning process.

I have noted that on my own campus and on others where General Education Review Committees have sprung up, such groups tend to attract the more innovative and nontraditional faculty and administrators. Having read through the Master Plans of many community college systems and coordinating boards, I can testify that general education goals and objectives are frequently described in glowing, rhetorical terms. It would seem that general education is the magic elixir which possess the healing power to cure the fractured patient--the centrifugal force which will keep the separate pieces of the enterprise from whirling off into space. Why, then, is general education at the community colleges in need of reform?

Perhaps the best explanation has been given by my friend and former mentor, Arthur M. Cohen, who has said, "Given the plethora of definitions, general education's failure to maintain itself consistently is easily understood; it is prey to any group with a strict view of curriculum."[9] In tracing the history of general education from Meikeljohn to the Great Books program at the University of Chicago to the Harvard-Rosovsky plan of the late seventies, Dr. Cohen points out that the chief deterrent to an integrated core curriculum has been the dominance of the academic department at the universities. Departments tend to be loyal to the disciplines, are research-oriented and prepare specialists. During the sixties, when student demands for relevance made colleges drop strict requirements and adopt cafeteria-style curricula, another serious blow was dealt to the common core.

At the two-year college, until recently, there has been a cautious disposition to imitate the four-year college in curriculum planning and replicate the compartmentalization of the disciplines. There are the added problems of designing a coherent core within the time constraints of a two-year program and the swing toward vocationalism and community services. Thus, although California and New York have legislated stipulated minimum hours of general education for community colleges which grant the Associate in Arts, or Science, or Applied Science degrees, for reasons similar to those that motivated four-year schools, two-year colleges have adopted that convenient compromise called the distribution requirement in order to meet the mandated hours of general education instruction. In practice, these courses have become introductory discipline-oriented courses; a Chinese-menu approach permits the student to choose from Column A (Social Sciences) either Introduction to Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology, etc., and then choose from another area, Column B (Natural Sciences), one of the four sciences. There is little attempt to show the interconnectedness of knowledge. By the mid-seventies, some states were requiring no more general education in community colleges and technical institutes than a semester of composition and one of political science. As had happened in the four-year schools, in the words of the Carnegie Commission, general education had fallen into disarray and became a "disaster area."[10]

At my college, we tried to meet the gauntlet thrown down by this change by forming in January in 1979, a General Education Review Committee. This representative group, inspired by the example of Harvard-Rosovsky, blessed by our college president with an eloquent charge, has accomplished much in four years. Our first year was the year of the Grope, when we tried to define general education, read background books and articles assembled by our intrepid librarian, Bonnie Mitchell, and drew up a list of aims and objectives for general education. It was then that I learned the truth of Art Cohen's statement about general education falling prey to any group with a strict view of curriculum. We argued and we hassled; we gave each constituency a chance to speak its mind; we ended with a list of aims that was broad, all-inclusive, and satisfied everyone, but we couldn't meet the deadline for getting into the college catalogue. However, that year we hosted the first conference on general education in community colleges ever assembled in New York State. We discovered a vein of common interest among 30 colleges in the topic and collected valuable statistics on programs at sister schools. At this conference was born the idea of a Community College General Education Association, an idea that became a reality the following year.

That year of 1980-81, in addition to hosting CCGEA's first Conference on Articulation with SUNY's upper-division colleges and universities, many of whom were designing new core configurations, Mohawk Valley Community College participated in the College Outcomes Measures Project of ACT--an experimental testing program designed to measure the overall effectiveness of a general education program. The results were interesting but inconclusive. We fared pretty well in comparison to other two-year colleges but, because the norms were still primarily four-year college-based and because only 45 students (a stratified sample) had taken the tests, the General Education Review Committee decided to keep the results confidential.

Meanwhile, we looked to other colleges and attended conferences, which impacted on the general education reform movement. We found that, in our view, there were two outstanding efforts to implement a true general education program at the community college--the Miami-Dade program and the Los Medanos, California core requirement. The first was a massive effort begun five years before at the largest multi-campus community college in the nation; the second was conceived at a relatively tiny college that had been built in the sixties figuratively from the ground up on general education principles.[11]

Looking back over the past two years, I see signs of progress at many two-year schools--the Community College of Baltimore, the Dallas system, and several SUNY colleges have established college-wide committees similar to the one I chair at Mohawk Valley Community College. There have been some interesting spin-offs from our deliberations--notably, an Interdisciplinary Humanities sequence, a proposal for a Science and Society course--but progress on redesigning the core has been slow, almost nil. In a time of austerity and instability, we have been re-

luctant to depart from the politically safe distribution requirements and have put curriculum reform on the back burner. There are some fascinating proposals at some of the other colleges I have mentioned but most are far from being implemented. At CCCEA, we continue to be cheered by the turnout at our annual conferences, by the fact that we attract not only the endangered humanists but faculty and administrators from all sectors of the two-year college spectrum. We have heard such speakers as Arthur Levine, Jeffrey Lukenbill and SUNY Chancellor Clifton R. Wharton, Jr. assure us that change is in the offing. Jerry Gaff, who has led the consortium Project GEM for a five-year stint, has coauthored a report with Thomas Klein in which the authors state "the general education 'revival' is still in its infancy."[12] It is comforting, even reasonable, to take the long view, but I can't help wondering why change has been so slow in coming?

It has been slow for all of the reasons I have outlined but, in particular, because of one factor which I have not stressed sufficiently. Little can be done to change a school's curriculum without the concurrence of faculty, students and administrators. Research indicates that the bulk of community college students do not care about general education reform and administrators in today's heavy weather are reluctant to rock the boat. The burden falls on the faculty to be the prime movers. But can they be? At the risk of stepping on some toes and dislocating some ankles, let me make some broad generalizations about faculty at community colleges.

Despite some high achievers and outstanding exceptions, faculty at two-year colleges who are in mid-career are doing what comes naturally--specializing in teaching their discipline. Many are satisfied to the point of complacency; the Center for Community Colleges, which surveyed 1,998 instructors in 156 two-year colleges in 1977, found a high positive correlation between faculty age and job satisfaction. Between the ages of 36 and 50, the percentages of high and medium satisfaction are quite evenly distributed, allowing for a dip for middle-age stress, but those between 46 and 60 are skewed in favor of high satisfaction.[13] While I do not wish to read too much into this single survey, my experience confirms that younger faculty members are more frustrated. Why is this? Younger teachers do not suffer from teacher burnout nor are they experiencing middle-age stress. Possibly their lower salaries force them to moonlight or they are discouraged when administrators assign them remedial courses, which they profess to love but really loathe. I am speculating, but then the CSCC study found that personal interaction with students and with their colleagues were rated highest as potential sources of advice on teaching by the faculty surveyed. Advice from administrators was a distant last among eight factors listed.[14] If this information is weighed together with the high satisfaction rates of middle-aged faculty, we could conclude that insularity goes hand in hand with seniority. And, indeed, community college faculty read fewer professional journals than their colleagues at senior institutions, and many regard in-service workshops as busy work, useful for the promotional file but, on the whole, not terribly productive. Most of my colleagues worship at the sacred flame of teaching--the complex process that goes on behind the classroom door. Those faculty who do wish to develop professionally do so on sabbaticals directed toward graduate work in their discipline or at a summer course intended to enrich a subject area they are already teaching. Occasionally, a faculty member will go for a second Master's or add another subject to his area of expertise, but these individuals are as rare as the few who move from one two-year college to another in this era of tight, "tenured in" job immobility.

What has all this to do with the state of general education? A lot, I think. There used to be a cadre of generalists at two-year colleges, some of whom are still around, but most of whom are disappearing. I think of Roy Mitchell, head of a General Education Department in the early sixties, who retired three years ago. Roy taught Communications, was trained at Columbia University's Graduate School of Education and had majored as an undergraduate in English. But all of us who worked with him thought of him as a Renaissance man. He talked constantly about cars and took them apart in his backyard, was up on McLuhan, played the piano (both classic and jazz), had read both James Joyce and John D. MacDonald, and knew most modern philosophers and theologians who came down the pike. He has great rapport with the technical faculty, who sensed his delight in knowing what made an engine hum. I still see Roy Mitchells around campus in embryo. There is a professor in his early forties who teaches writing, film and art appreciation, and is undertaking to team-teach a history of technology course with a colleague. But they are a rare breed. It is distressing to think that five years after the CSCC survey, the generation who were then in their late twenties are entering the stage of medium to high satisfaction, that same generation who were taught by their graduate school idols to master the discipline and emulate specialism.

We know that specialized courses and advanced research have their place and, even at the community college, some students are capable of doing more than introductory courses. But, at this stage of the educational cycle, general education should not be a second-rate citizen in typically overbuilt, overspecialized degree programs. Such curricula will produce a generation of narrowly trained technicians, incapable of flexibility or ill-attuned to meeting the challenges and crises of the coming century. Implicitly, educational planners have recognized the dangers of vocationalism. The National Endowment for the Humanities, together with the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, has just concluded a two-year series of workshops for two-year college teachers, whose purpose was "Strengthening Humanities in Occupational Curricula." The Sloan Foundation has backed the newly-formed Council for the Understanding of Technology in Human Affairs, which is holding annual conferences aimed at instilling an informed view of technical achievements in liberal arts courses and curricula.

At Mohawk Valley Community College in June of

1981, the first National Humanities Institute for two-year college teachers was held under the sponsorship of the Community College Humanities Association. Its purpose was "Integrating the Humanities and Business Education in Community Colleges." As a codirector, I recall that intense and charged atmosphere during a month when twenty teams of business and humanities instructors from colleges representing 15 states, some as far away as Hawaii, gathered to develop a common project which they were all pledged to implement the following year. We discovered how tightly drawn were the bonds of our disciplinary affiliations; we identified the myths and stereotypes we held about each other; we argued about the value of the presentations and lectures; we quarreled like a family; and discovered what we had in common. The innovative courses developed at that Institute--such as "Business in Modern Literature," "New Age Humanities and Business: A Comparison of Japanese and United States Management and Culture"--are now being evaluated and refined by the teams and will be available for replication. But these developments, important as they are, are merely indices of what is to come. They suggest that the sterile debate between the two cultures can be ended, that the thrust of the new general education programs will be interdisciplinary, but they do not go far enough in nurturing a new generation of generalists.

The future of community colleges as colleges may hinge on a massive effort to encourage and stimulate generalists who will foster the goals of general education in their courses and instill them in their students. While there have been many attempts to develop nontraditional graduate programs for community college teachers such as the Doctor of Arts in Teaching, the Two-Year College Development Centers at Albany, New York and Dallas, Texas, and the home-campus study program of Nova University, none of these alternate forms of graduate education has proved popular with two-year college instructors, nor do they address the problem of vanishing generalists which I have identified.[15] Perhaps the closest program procedurally to do what I have in mind is the City University of New York's Community Colleges Fellowships Project, now in its third year.

The CUNY program was made possible by a $375,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation which was used to fund released time for metropolitan area community college teachers, who then journeyed to branches of CUNY to attend doctoral seminars funded by the grant. Their home colleges continued to pay their salaries, while their "released" courses were taught by an intern from CUNY, who received a stipend from the grant. For three years, various disciplinary groups at two-year colleges were invited by CUNY to compete for an invitation to spend part of their work week in stimulating seminars taught by distinguished faculty in their disciplines. This was a worthy effort but, in my view, its disciplinary orientation inevitably contributed to the inbreeding of specialists of which two-year colleges have an ample supply. Had it encouraged cross-over courses and broadening, interdisciplinary learning, this ingenious formula might have stemmed the "generalist brain drain" to some extent. One would hope that a similar formula may be worked out soon with funding from a foundation and a community college system with some contribution or financial sacrifice from the teacher-participants to indicate the extent of their motivation. They should be released from teaching entirely for a semester or the school year. Part-time immersion in a program for generalists would be superficial and only marginally effective at best.

What would be the curriculum of a program for generalists? Without assuming a mantle of a prophet or calling for a national commission to study the problem, I hesitate to map out the specifics, but I believe there are several experts who have pointed out the general goals of such a program and the direction it would take.

When addressing the CCGEA's Third Annual Conference, SUNY Chancellor Wharton disclosed what he believed the components of general education for the 1980's and beyond should be.[16] He called for educational competencies (using the term in its colloquial sense) in three areas: 1) Symbolic competence, which would encompass the use of signs--written, oral and mathematical. Here, he emphasized the study of foreign languages, particularly non-western languages; 2) Epistemological competence, which would orient students to the structures of knowledge in the new society--a scientific, technological society. Here he stressed courses in technology, computer literacy, and social change; and 3) Cultural competency, which corresponds to the traditional notion of the richness of an individual's relation to his or her milieu and the quality and quantity of human participation in the artistic and cultural heritage of contemporary society. Here, he pointed out that he was not referring to the venerable "Western Civilization" course but an area that encompassed a whole series of overlapping communities, such as family and home, workplace, state, nation and world. He called for stronger offerings in world history area studies and non-western approaches to science and the humanities.

If one compares Dr. Wharton's competencies with Boyer and Levine's ". . .six broad subject areas that we believe to be the proper concern of general education," we find that they are roughly parallel.[17] The six areas are: 1) the shared use of symbols; 2) shared membership in groups and institutions; 3) shared producing and consuming; 4) shared relationships with nature; 5) shared sense of time; and 6) shared values and beliefs.

The key words in both sets of schema are easily underlined--shared, common, particiption--all suggesting what Mark Van Doren said: "The connectedness of things is what the educator contemplates to the limits of his capacity."[18]

To achieve this goal, I would suggest that community college teachers undergoing my hypothetical curriculum for generalists pledge themselves during the semester (or year) to take three courses not in the area of their graduate major, breadth courses that would be offered by outstanding undergraduate teachers at the university, not necessarily "name scholars" who

communicate frequently only the aura of their scholarly reputations. In addition, a fourth course would be prescribed which would be an integrative seminar, a methods and materials course for developing interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary core courses.

Graduates of this program would be certified generalists (due to the experience; no degree need be awarded) who would return to their schools and provide an impetus for reform in general education. There would still be opposition from traditionalists and the opposing case would still be made by the specialists, but at least there would be seasoned role models to fight the battle.

I am not pollyannish enough to believe that some student would not balk at new requirements or to believe that every two-year college would wish to revise its core distribution scheme. But neither am I certain Woodrow Wilson's statement that "it is easier to move a cemetery than to change a college curriculum" is appropriate at this critical time. Community colleges are a microcosm of their counties and districts and townships. I remember in this connection a scene from Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" in which the young sister of the hero speaks of a letter a friend of hers received when she was sick. On the envelope the sender had written the following address: "Lane Crofut; The Crofut Farm; Grover's Corners; Sutton County; New Hampshire; United States of America." And then it continued: "Continent of North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God"--all on a single envelope.

To be able to send such a letter or, better, to write the contents inside would be an objective of an ideal general education program.

Footnotes

[1] David W. Breneman and Susan C. Nelson, "The Future of Community Colleges," Change (July/August, 1981), pp. 24-25.

[2] Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer, The American Community College (San Francisco, 1982), passim.

[3] Cohen and Brawer, "Confronting Identity" (New York, 1972); "The Two-Year College Instructor Today" (New York, 1977); "The Humanities in Two-Year Colleges: The Faculty in Review" (Los Angeles, 1975); also, in this series, "The Humanities in Two-Year Colleges; Faculty Characteristics" (Los Angeles, 1976).

[4] G. R. Kissler, "Report of the Task Group on Retention and Transfer," unpublished report (University of California at Berkley, 1980), p. 8.

[5] Cohen and Brawer, The American Community College, p. 259

[6] Harold Cantor, "Perspectives from a Pressure Cooker: General Education in Two-Year Colleges," Insight (Albany, 1962), pp. 34-37.

[7] Charles R. Monroe, Profile of the Community College (San Francisco, 1972), p. 67

[8] Jeffrey D. Luckenbill and Robert H. McCabe, "General Education in a Changing Society" (Dubuque, Iowa, 1978), p. 29.

[9] Arthur M. Cohen, "The Case for General Education in Community Colleges," paper presented to Forum on Future Purposes, Content and Formats for the General Education of Community College Students (Montgomery College, Maryland, 1978).

[10] Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Mission of the College Curriculum (San Francisco, 1977).

[11] Cantor, op. cit., p. 35

[12] The Chronicle of Higher Education (May 19, 1982), p. 8.

[13] Cohen and Brawer, The American Community College, p. 81

[14] Cohen and Brawer, The American Community College, p. 83

[15] S. V. Martorana, ed., and others, Graduate Education and Community Colleges: Approaches to Community College Staff Development, proceeding of a conference on the National Board on Graduate Education (Airlie, Virginia, 1975), passim.

[16]Clifton J. Wharton, Jr., "General Education: Stopping the Pendulum--But Can We Get Off?" SUNY: The News) Albany. April/May, 1982), pp. 3 & 7.

[17]Ernest L. Boyer and Arthur Levine, "A Quest for Common Learning" (Washington, D.C., 1981), pp. 35-45.

[18]Mark Van Doren, "Liberal Education" (New York, 1943), p. 115.

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ADULT DEVELOPMENT THEORY: THE MEDIUM AND THE MESSAGE

by Barbara Viniar
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The Life Skills Program, a collaborative effort of Instructional Services and Student Services at Rockland Community College, offered its first Life/Career/Education Planning Seminar in January, 1981. It was a thirty-hour, two-credit pilot course for five returning adult women. By spring, 1982, these seminars had enrolled close to five hundred students, ranging from early admissions high school students to senior citizens. Seminars are now offered for either two or three credits[1] in a variety of time frames. The faculty and counselors who facilitate the seminars have completed a required 30-hour training program which is both theoretical and experiential in nature and replicates the seminar model in which students will be involved. Student and facilitator manuals have been field tested and are being revised for publication. Longitudinal studies of participants have been initiated.

The implementation and rapid growth of the Life/Career/Education Planning Seminars, subtitled "Who Am I and Where Do I Want to Go?," represent a commitment by the College to make Life Skills part of its curriculum. Building on the Life Coping Skills, Teachers College, and work at the Center for the study of Higher Education, Memphis State University, the seminars have been created to "compliment the existing curriculum offerings of the sciences, the humanities and the arts, literacy skills development and vocational and technical training." (Adkins, 1974) The primary goal of the seminars is to increase the effectiveness of individual decision-making. Its objectives are to increase students' understanding of self and others and to provide both information about educational and career alternatives and the tools with which to explore these options in a self-directed manner. To accomplish these objectives, the college has integrated adult development theory into the design and content of the seminars. Life Cycle, Ego, Moral and Intellectual Development and Learning Style theory are fundamental elements of the format of the course and of facilitator training, which intentionally examines a variety of developmental theories and their relationship to the Life/Education/Career Planning process. In addition, through a series of individual and group exercises, the theory is presented to the students as a tool for personal development.

The presentation of adult development theory follows general learning theory and specifically the Adkins model of stimulus, evocation, objective inquiry and application, which is taught to the facilitators. The facilitator models each exercise as a stimulus. The students' own knowledge is evoked as participants share their experiences to the degree that they are "comfortable." The value of each person's experience is dignified. The group then explores the literature of adult development theory, incorporating their own knowledge. The theory and the personal data generated through the exercises are later applied to education and career planning.

The first element of adult development theory introduced in the seminar is Life Cycle theory. Most faculty have an intuitive understanding of life cycle issues, both from their personal development and their experiences with students of different ages. They recognize the different levels of motivation and "outside" experiences older students bring to their traditional classes. However, although these differences may influence interpersonal relationships, or the content of an essay, they usually remain extraneous to the course.

The Life/Career/Education Seminars focus on the periodic "realignment of values and lifestyles" which constitute the life cycle. They create an intentional link between the life cycle and education which allows the students to select courses that respond to their needs during a particular phase or transition.

According to K. Patricia Cross, "educators who understand the life phase being left behind and the one to come can design learning experiences to aid in the transition to a new phase of the life cycle." (Cross, 1981) The premise of this seminar is that in addition, students who acquire this understanding will be better prepared

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[1]The number of credits depends on the number of instructional hours, theoretical content and evaluation criteria.

to design their own experiences, or choose among those offered.

Knowledge of the life cycle enhances students' understanding of how education fits into the context of their lives, or influences their lives. This understanding can decrease the anxiety of a 17-year old who has no idea of what she wants to do, or of a 65-year old man fulfilling a deferred dream. Courses may aid in the tasks of career building, parenting, or achieving independence during different phases of a student's life.

Since individual life cycle issues become the curriculum focus for this section, the facilitator must be sensitive to the "total" student, recognizing how the balance between school, work and family, or the "life structure," will be different for each student. Life cycle issues are essential, rather than extraneous.

Most Life/Career/Educational Planning Seminars are heterogeneous. Following the enrollment pattern of the institution, day sections include more younger students, evening sections more older students. In the evening section reserved for those adults planning to prepare portfolios to earn credit for learning from work and life experience, the age range in 1981-82 was 25 to 55. The average age was 39.9.

Most students have indicated that a heterogeneous group adds to their experience. Teenagers gain insight into their parents' perspective; older adults learn from younger adults. However, some students have asked for homogeneous groups that focus on common concerns. Such requests have led to the adaptation of the model for specific populations, such as retiring police officers, senior citizens and young adults. One facilitator has developed a new course, "The Emerging of Identity: Young Adulthood." It incorporates Roger Gould's theory of the development of consciousness (Gould, 1978) and Arthur Chickering's vectors of development (Chickering, 1969). In addition, the Life Skills Program has sponsored a one-day workshop for women, using elements of the seminar.

Two exercises and at least two readings specifically address Life Cycle theory in the seminar. The first is the Life Portrait. As all exercises in the seminar, the Life Portrait allows students to generate their own data about themselves. This data can then be compared to the theory and used for individual decision-making. After a sample is modelled by the facilitator, each student draws a picture of his or her life, usually from birth into the future, using stick figures and symbols to represent significant people, places and events. The Life Portrait evokes from students a simple but personal form of life cycle theory. School, work, moving, marriage and children emerge as typical "marker events" in a student's life. As each portrait is shared with the group, students are able to compare and contrast the events they considered important. Common patterns emerge.

Next, the Milestone Exercise allows the students to build on the basic pattern of the Life Portrait. This exercise asks each student to divide his or her life into segments, describing in writing the major theme or issues that define the segment and its corresponding achievements, tasks, and significant relationships. The model seeks to have students form an individual version of the normative model advanced by Erikson. The "event" defined in the Life Portrait can be expanded in the context of this exercise. Now the students begin to understand what makes moving, for example, a milestone. In their own language, they describe how moving may involve the tasks of achieving independence, developing interpersonal relationships and revising career plans as they are defined later in the theory.

When the Milestone Exercise was first used, students were asked to form segments of their life since high school. To accommodate younger students, the wording was changed to "beginning with your teenage years." Some students choose to divide their entire life. All students, including the youngest, have been able to describe significant milestones in their lives. For younger students these frequently involve moving, the death or divorce of parents, choosing to attend college, and the formation of significant relationships. Again, common patterns emerge.

A pattern of individual differences also emerges. Responses to the Milestone Exercise occur along a continuum, from "relying on stereotypes and cliches" to exhibiting "conceptual complexity and objectivity." Students may prepare and share the exercise in a manner that conforms to what they believe is expected and will gain acceptance. Others take the opportunity to read poems or essays they have written to describe their milestones. Some responses are simple and brief. Others are complex and share "vividly conveyed feeling." Responses to this exercise correspond to the stages of ego development defined by Jane Loevinger (Loevinger, 1976), which are explored later in the seminar. Without labelling students, the facilitator can gain insights into their developmental stages that will be helpful in the planning phase of the seminar.

Through the Life Portrait and the Milestone the students have in effect created their own life cycle theory. They see a progression of issues with which they have dealt. They have discovered commonalities and differences in the patterns of their lives. At this point, they are introduced to the literature of life cycle theory.[2] "The Eight Stages of Man to Freedom," Gerald Gargiulo (Gargiulo, 1970)," and "Developmental Tasks of the Adult Years," a chart prepared by Arthur Chickering and Robert Havighurst (Chickering and Havighurst, 1981),

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[2]The format of the seminar is flexible. Some facilitators may introduce some theory before the Milestone Exercise. In addition, many students have at least an awareness of the theory through popular magazines or books such as Gail Sheehy's Passages.

are the primary materials for discussion. The chart synthesizes the work of Erikson, Neugarten, Chickering, Levinson, Sheehy and Gould.

Erikson's theory introduces the important concept of developmental tasks, which most of the theories have in common. When discussing stages, students recognize that the basic conflicts Erikson defines in each stage are often renegotiated several times during a person's life. "Basic Trust vs. Mistrust," for example, is a conflict during infancy that often reappears in adulthood during periods of emotional vulnerability, such as after a divorce.

Facilitators point out that the word crisis, associated with the conflict between "Identity vs. Role Diffusion," and used by theorists such as Gail Sheehy, is symbolic of both conflict and opportunity. They may introduce Neugarten's concept of the effect of timing on an individual's perception of whether or not a stage will be perceived as a crisis.

An examination of Erikson's theory generates discussion of the developmental differences between females and males. Facilitators note the white, middle class, male bias of most of the research. Alice Rossi's article, "Life Span Theories and Women's Lives" (Rossi, 1980), and Jessie Barnard's chapter from The Modern American College, "Women's Educational Needs" (Barnard, 1981), are offered for further exploration.

Chickering and Havighurst's chart reemphasizes the cyclical nature of developmental tasks. (See Figure 1.) The chart divides the life cycle into six chronological periods: 16-23 (Late Adolescence and Youth); 23-35 (Early Adulthood); 35-35 (Mid-life Transition); 45-57 (Middle Adulthood); 57-65 (Late Adult Transition); and 65+ (Late Adulthood), assigning developmental tasks to each period. Students quickly recognize, however, that in contemporary society, an individual can anticipate "choosing and preparing a career," which appears under "late adolescence and youth," four or five times, and "deciding on a partner" and "starting a family," tasks of "early adulthood," more than once. "Achieving independence" is quickly recognized as a task that will differ in timing for women and men.

Students also recognize the importance of the

Figure 1
From the
Handbook on Adult Development
and Planned Change
F. Thomas Clark and J. Lindquist
Institute for Academic Improvement
Memphis State University
Memphis, Tennessee, 1979

historical context of the theory and their own development. They discuss the differences between resolving the tasks of late adolescence and youth, for example, during the 1950's or the 1980's, given the relative social expectations of those eras. Students gain an understanding of the psycho-social nature of adult developmental tasks. Each time period defined by life cycle theory has a corresponding psycho-social task which is undertaken in response to social expectations that vary by gender, race and culture, and which also depend on individual personality structure.

Students are encouraged to explore the differences between their own lives and the patterns synthesized by Chickering and Havighurst. The individual and group data they generate allows them to disagree with the theory, fostering the skill of critical thinking. The disparity between their own development and the theory illustrates the power of social norms, however. In this segment of the seminar students learn to use concepts taught in psychology and sociology courses.

The chart as it was originally drawn by Havighurst and Chickering had the clusters of tasks for each phase proceeding from the upper left hand corner to the lower right, or down the page. In response to older adults' objections, the chart was modified. Life now symbolically progresses upward.

In the "Personal Characteristics Schemata" of her "Characteristics of Adults as Learners (CAL)" model, Cross displays three variables: "Physical Characteristics/Aging; Sociocultural Characteristics/Life Phases; and Psychological Characteristics/Developmental Stages" (Cross, 1981). The first is receiving increased attention from the seminar's designers, particularly as preretirement and retired adults extend the age range of the population. The second is the focus of the Life Cycle presentations and exercises which have been described. The third variable forms another significant component of the seminar, in which ego, moral, ethical and intellectual development are explored.

Jane Loevinger's comprehensive theory of Ego Development provides the organizing framework for this component of the seminar. According to Loevinger, ego is one's "total self." It is a "frame of reference that structures one's world and within which one perceives the world" (Loevinger, 1976). She defines four dimensions, "impulse control and character development, interpersonal style, conscious preoccupation, and cognitive style," which form a coherent structure at eight different stages of development. (Two of these are stable periods which actually represent transitions from one stage to another.) The stages are: "presocial, symbiotic, impulsive, self-protective, conformist, self-aware (a transition), conscientious, individualistic (a transition), autonomous and integrated. "On a continuum from presocial to integrated, the stages represent added self-understanding and responsibility. These stages, and the four dimensions across which they are measured, encompass the key concepts of moral and intellectual development which the seminar attempts to communicate.

Although the seminar's designers wished to use Loevinger, they also had important criticisms regarding the complexity of the theory and its application. Accepting Loevinger's claim that there are well-adjusted individuals at every level beyond self-protective, the facilitators disagreed with any statement that the theory is value free. As educators, we are committed to fostering individual development toward the conscientious, autonomous, and integrated stages. This commitment is based on the belief that the qualities of responsibility, respect for autonomy, understanding of self in a social context and conceptual complexity which are characteristic of these stages are beneficial to a humane society. Development that enhances an individual's contribution to such a society is the goal of a liberal education.

As one student realized after the session on ego development ended, studying the theory is an intentionally "conscientious" activity. It enables students to see beyond the jargon of "mid-life crisis" or "conformist." When individual experiences are shared in an atmosphere of mutual respect, communication and toleration increases. Students are able to move beyond stereotypes in understanding themselves and others.

The seminar has been extremely successful in communicating the concepts of a very difficult theory to students at a variety of skill levels. To provide access into Loevinger, some time is spent discussing Eric Berne's theory of structural and transactional analysis. This enables students to understand the concept of differentiated ego states on a less complex level than Loevinger. It introduces vocabulary similar to Loevinger's to describe behavior at different stages, and, in its description of one individual incorporating all three ego stages, foreshadows Loevinger's additive model.

From the beginning pilot, it was decided that the seminar would not attempt to measure ego development. Loevinger's theory includes the premise that ego development is measurable. She and her associates designed a sentence completion test for that purpose. It would have been inconsistent with the goals and methodology of the seminar, however, to use an instrument that must be scored by a professional, rather than the student. In addition, there was doubt as to the usefulness of the information the score would provide.

Since Loevinger's model is additive, as a person progresses from one stage to another they retain the characteristics of the previous stage, although they do not necessarily use or exhibit them. Loevinger's model is invariate and does not account for regression. The designers of the Life/Career/Education Seminar felt that in many cases regression would occur in the behaviors and feelings of any individual across all four of Loevinger's dimensions. They would not necessarily indicate a change in stage, which we were not measuring. It would be appropriate to use the names of the stages, however, to describe the behaviors and feeling which dominated an individual's response to situational difference.

After a didactic presentation on Loevinger's theory, the students do an exercise in which they describe an atypical situation in their lives and the name of the stage which describes how they were functioning at that time. They are asked to examine all four dimensions and give reasons for their feelings and behaviors. Students discover that they share what may be adaptive strategies in response to similar situations. After the loss of a job, for instance, students describe themselves as self-protective. When the cause of the layoff was external, they often continued to externalize blame for failure to find a new job. They became wary and manipulative in attempts to find new employment or get the most out of unemployment benefits. Since employment is a survival issue, they became self-protective, seeking control. Individuals who otherwise felt themselves to be tolerant found themselves stereotyping "blacks" or "women" while blaming them for taking away job opportunities.

In another common example, divorce is seen as a situation in which the system literally forces individuals into self-protective behaviors and feelings. A person in the process of a legal separation is encouraged to be opportunistic and see the situation as a "win"-"lose" struggle. He or she becomes wary and manipulative while engaging in a battle for advantage. Again, all men or all women became wrongdoers.

Using Loevinger's sentence completion test is now being considered as an evaluation strategy. The exercise used in the seminar will remain focused on a coherent structure of feelings and behaviors in response to situational differences.

In addition to Loevinger, the seminar includes Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development, in which a sequence of stages of moral reasoning, from egocentric, to conformist, to abstract principles, is measured by responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas. Students often create their own dilemmas, or use examples from current events. In one recent session, the students initiated a discussion of Bruce Caputo's withdrawal from the New York State gubernatorial race when it was discovered that he had lied about his military service. They compared his lie, which they almost all condemned, to that of weather forecaster Bob Harris, whose falsified credentials also led to his termination. Most students supported Harris. They discussed the moral reasoning surrounding each man's decision to lie, and the stage of their own reasoning in supporting or condemning either individual.

Carol Gilligan's alternative theory of moral development is also discussed. According to Gilligan, the abstract principles of the higher levels of Kohlberg's scale are biased in favor of male values, rather than feminine, interpersonal values. When measured by Kohlberg's scale, women appear unable to develop the capacity for moral reasoning at the highest levels. Gilligan's claims again illustrate the developmental differences related to gender and the biases of the research (Gilligan, 1981).

Students receive annotated bibliographies on Life Cycle, and Ego, Moral, and Ethical Development theory. They may pursue a variety of projects in order to fulfill the course requirements. Several use a specific work, such as Passages (Sheehy, 1976) or Seasons of a Man's Life (Levison, 1978) to analyze their own lives. Many use Life Cycle or Ego Development theory to analyze characters in novels, movies or television shows. Students have submitted papers, tape recordings and interviews to demonstrate their understanding of the theory and ability to apply it to real or created situations.

After acquiring an understanding of adult development theory and its application to their own lives, students add another dimension to the self-analysis they will use in planning. They complete a Learning Styles Inventory. This instrument, which is self-scoring, measures preferences in "Condition" for learning, including relationships with other learners and instructors, "Content" of learning, such as "Numeric, Qualitative, Inanimate or People," and "Mode" of learning, including "Listening, Reading, and Iconic" and "Direct Experience" (Canfield, 1976). Because Rockland Community College offers a complex array of learning modes, from self-paced mediated instruction, Study Circles and individualized learning contracts to lectures and seminars, it is essential for students to assess their preferred learning styles in order to make realistic and satisfying choices. Once they have determined their preferred learning style, they may elect a mode that matches their preference. Or, they may choose a mode that is not preferred in order to build a new strength, or simply to experiment.

One of the most important features of the Learning Style Inventory is the "expectancy" score. This score indicates how the student expects to perform in school. For many adults, particularly women, this score may be low. Although they are competent adults in the world of work and home management, they are not certain if they can transfer their skills to an educational setting. A low score is also often directly related to prior lack of success in school, which they now understand may have been related to the lack of alternatives.

The understanding of learning style preferences is a helpful introduction to the next several exercises, which clarify values, interests and skills. These allow students to understand their work preferences as they move to concrete planning activities. As a result of extensive self-assessment, the careers they choose to explore during the next phase of the seminar represent realistic choices related to individual needs and strengths.

During this phase of the seminar students learn to use the resources of the career library. These include the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, The Occupational Outlook Handbook, Catalyst materials, Vocation Biographies, and individual career files. Students learn the important distinction between salaries at entry-level positions and senior or management level positions. For many considering career changes, who may have to "begin again," this information is a rude awakening. Each student is required

to research a minimum of two careers. They must determine the necessary education/training requirements, entry level salary, job outlook and work environment. The process of career research is a skill the students will be able to use independently, as needed, during their vocational development.

With this additional information, the students develop long and short-term goals and plans for achieving them. Each student completes an "Individual Development Plan" which specifies immediate and future actions. These may include interviewing people employed in their area of interest, credit and non-credit courses, or a period of reflection.

During this phase of the seminar, emphasis is placed on the "Situational Characteristics" of Cross's CAL model: "Part-time Learning vs. Full-time Learning, and Voluntary Learning vs. Compulsory Learning." The adults in the pre-portfolio preparation section are almost all part-time learners who must develop their educational/career plans in relation to commitments to their jobs and families. (This "situational" characteristic is clearly also "personal," since commitments may depend on the phase of life cycle.) As Cross points out, "voluntariness" exists along a continuum. For some adults, school "is for me." It is for personal fulfillment after a last child has graduated, or after many years of working. For others, it is a company requirement to maintain a job or be eligible for promotion. For some it is not a "requirement," but is implicitly expected for reentry into the job market or career advancement. The advisement that occurs during this part of the seminar must therefore extend beyond what sequence of courses to follow. The planning process must consider all the "characteristics of adults as learners," making use of all the information the student has acquired during the seminar.

At the conclusion of the seminar, students have acquired an understanding of themselves in relation to other adults that they can use in making decisions about their education and careers. They have arrived at this understanding by integrating personal experience and adult development theory. The structure of the seminar, moving from simple to more complex tasks and between didactic presentations and individual and group exercises, has been designed to foster individual development. Adult development theory has been the medium and the message.

Evaluation studies thus far indicate that the message has been well received. The seminar is helping students access the institution with less anxiety. They feel better prepared to select their course, and feel that Life Skills has enhanced their appreciation of the "existing curriculum." They report greater self-confidence and increased ability to conceptualize and resolve developmental tasks. In a six-month follow-up study, two of the women in the original pilot group attributed positive career decisions to their participation in the seminar. One turned down an employment offer which the seminar helped her realize conflicted with her values and goals. Another, who was planning to leave her job, and took the course to find out "where she wanted to go," remained in her job. She discovered which elements of the job were dissatisfying and was able to address them directly with her supervisor. She is planning a long-term career change, her learning spared her the need to waste time and energy on finding a new job. She is now completing her portfolio and is on her way to accomplishing her first educational goal, an Associates Degree in Business Administration.

The knowledge of "Who Am I" gained in a seminar that relies on adult development theory for its form and content is not only answering the question "Where Do I Want to Go?" but is helping students get there.

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES: THEY'RE IN THE TEACHING BUSINESS TOO

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For too long, student activities programs at colleges and universities have been looked upon, by too many, as unessential to the mission of higher education. Student activities have often been considered a luxury, rather than an integral part of the curriculum offered our youth. This article will speak to this unfortunate truth by reviewing student activities programs in light of a universally accepted curriculum structure. Hopefully, it will become evident that student activities programs are curricula and, as a result, student personnel professionals involved in this field are in the teaching business too.

Background

Universally, educators consider basic guidelines as they proceed to develop and implement a curriculum. These guidelines are comprehensive and serve well as the foundation for the building of a course, no matter what level of education is under consideration.

The first step involved is that of a course description. In clear and succinct terms, educators summarize the overall content of the curriculum to be offered. Following this, the heart of the issue, or rationale for the course offering, is explained. It is within this section that educational philosophy is offered to justify the course content as an integral part of an individual's education.

The third phase is to state, in outline form, the course objectives. These goals indicate the long-range behavioral changes desired. With these objectives clearly in mind, major units of study are described. They are outlined by content, general to specific, and given prescribed timetables for their consideration.

Finally, a section is dedicated to the teaching methods to be used, the recommended texts and readings, and finally the basis for evaluation.

Student Activities--A Curriculum

Course Description

Student activities can appropriately be described as those programs presented within the educational environment but outside of the traditionally academic classroom experience. Cultural, social and educational activities are planned to enhance the student's total college learning experience. As reflected in the text of Pieces of Eight, student activities extend the learning environment "by providing opportunities for students to develop their talents through creative experiences, exchanges and settings." (Appelton, Briggs, Rhodegan, 1978, p. 44)

Rationale

Learning theory and philosophies of education in support of student activities programming in institutions of higher learning abound. Capsulized in Pieces of Eight, this philosophy is summarized as: "The sharpening of intellectual skills and preprofessional competencies represents the primary goal of the educational enterprise; this rightly has received the greatest attention over the years. Yet, coming to grips with personal strengths and limitations, identity, autonomy, values, feelings and purpose is also critical to human development. To assume that only cognitive development is involved in the learning process is to fail to recognize that human development cannot be neatly categorized into sets of qualities and capacities." (Appelton, Briggs, Rhodegan, 1978, p. 46).

In J. E. Jones's Learning, "learning for our purposes is defined as changes in behavior as the individual interacts with an ever expanding environment." (Jones, 1967, p. 4). Student activities programs are certainly to be considered a part of this necessary ever expanding environment.

In addition to philosophical support, research reveals additional rationale for the inclusion of student activities programs in the educational setting. It is evident that the areas of recruitment, attrition/retention and job placement are strongly influenced by the strength and status of student activities programs on the college level.

Recruitment research reveals that potential students place a high level of importance on the availability of learning experiences outside of the classroom. As a result, students view a college as a valuable environment worthy of investment, if student life is given high priority by the institution.

A current national concern for higher education is that of attrition. Declining enrollments and increased numbers of student dropouts are topics of discussion at many a university meeting. Research indicates, however, that students who are involved in student activities are less likely to withdraw or drop out of college before they are able to complete their degree.

At Keene State University in New Hampshire, a 1978 task force on attrition determined that "eighty-five percent of the students who left the university before completing a degree program were involved in either one (27%) or no (58%) activities." In Astin's Preventing Students from Dropping Out, he states: "Participation in extracurricular activities, especially membership in social fraternities and sororities, is also significantly related to staying in college. These findings support the theory that student persistence to some extent depends on the degree of personal involvement in campus life and environment. To capitalize on such findings, institutions should increase opportunities for extracurricular activities, facilitate student entry into such activities, and encourage students to take part." (Astin, 1975, 108, 158).

In the area of placement potential a study at the University of Minnesota on the 1979 graduating class clearly supports the assumption that an individual's likelihood for successful job placement is increased by one's involvement in student activities. Placement counselors at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City support this finding and agree that employers are seeking the well-rounded, wholely-educated individual. They agree that through student activity involvement, students acquire leadership skills, management techniques and a necessary self-assessment which aids them as they pursue job placement.

Course Objectives

Having stated the justification for student activities, the major course objectives can now be explained. The first objective is: to aid students in the development of participatory skills. In a decade which promises only increased stress due to potential political economic pressures, educators can provide no greater service than to educate students in learning how to relax, how to productively use their leisure time, how to become truly well-versed, well-rounded individuals. If students are provided with a varied and quality choice, they will be given the opportunity to examine more closely areas already known to them in which they would like to become more experienced, or new areas to pursue. Their interests will broaden, as well as their total educated being.

The second objective is: to aid students in the development of leadership skills. By training students in management techniques, personal and interpersonal skills, students are better prepared to deal with their future, in their personal as well a professional fields. It is not enough to master academic pursuits, skills of a trade or profession. There must also be an understanding of people and how to deal with them, as well as an understanding of self. A grasp of these skills assist us all as we manage our lives and organize our pursuits.

Units of Study

Although units of study can be described, it is impossible to adhere to a predetermined timetable, as can classroom faculty. Student activities units are ongoing and oftentimes overlap. Programs presented to meet both objectives are continuously offered. Primary units of concern are as follows:

Unit I: Programming--the planning, implementation and follow through
- A. Cultural Events: Theater, jazz, music, film
- B. Social Events: Dances, pubs
- C. Educational Events: Speakers, trips
- D. Special Events: Orientations, graduations
- E. Leisure Time Events: Hobbies, crafts, theater, film

Unit II: Interpersonal Skills
- A. Group Dynamics
- B. Motivation Techniques
- C. Communications Skills
- D. Public Relations Techniques

Unit III: Personal Skills
- A. Adjustment to Environment
- B. Organizational Skills
- C. Communications Skills
- D. Decision-Making Skills

Unit IV: Leadership Skills
- A. Time Management
- B. Management by Objectives
- C. Stress Management
- D. Small Business Management
- E. Shared Leadership Skills

Unit content varies from institution to institution. However, the above does reflect several universal categories covered by personnel involved in student activities.

Teaching Methods

As in the classroom setting, teaching methods should and do vary as student activities personnel implement their curriculum. A strong belief in self-induced learning is evident. The primary method is that of counselling, either on a one-to-one basis or in groups. A second technique is to have students determine their own programs with the aid of resources made available to them. Successes and failures become educational reality.

Lecturing is also offered, but at a minimum. Workshops and seminars are offered on all unit content. Conferences are promoted, attended and then discussed and evaluated. Multi-media is used to promote all aspects of the curriculum, in the learning process as well as in the advertising of events. Slides, videotapes,

films and cassettes are common ingredients to any student activities program.

Students work independently on a project or in groups through committees, when necessary. There are agenda to be set, meetings to chair, reports to be written, letters to be drafted, policies to be defined, programs to arrange, publicity to design, articles to write, phone calls to make, contracts to be signed. Trained student personnel administrators supervise and serve as counselors in all of the above.

In many instances specific leadership training workshops are offered. During a weekend off campus, conducted by trained faculty, students experience group dynamics in progress. Students are given the opportunity to experience, first hand, new decision-making techniques, shared leadership, management by objectives and time management. They are then better able to evaluate themselves in relation to groups.

Obviously, knowing the students involved will determine the teaching methods emphasized during any one given semester. There is no doubt, however, that the teaching methods used are varied and educationally sound.

In addition to specific teaching methods, many texts and suggested readings are used by students involved in student life and student activities. Several publications designed by the National Council of College Publications Advisers cover topics such as the governance of student publications and the ethics and responsibilities of advising college student publications.

Many books are available on time management, stress management and management by objectives. An extremely widely used text is Leland Bradford's Making Meetings Work. A required reading often is Miles' text Learning to Work in Groups.

There are special pamphlets focusing on specific topics that are often used. Student Activities Fees by Dr. David Meabon and Dr. Robert Alexander is a highly acclaimed resource used in budget allocation. Texts on small business management abound. A pamphlet entitled Students Helping Students also serves as a resource as student leaders are trained as peer counselors for other students at the college.

Many of the national associations involved in student personnel services and student activities have information for use by professionals in this field. These texts and materials are the suggested and required readings for students involved in student activities at the college level.

Methods of Evaluation

Evaluating student activities programs is an ongoing concern for student personnel administrators and an essential ingredient to the program. Obviously, if credit is given, specific assignments are made. Students are often asked to write a position paper on a program or policy under consideration. In many instances, students prepare a case study, taken from their professional or social environment, for use in discussions on group dynamics. When workshops are given on such topics as stress management, management by objectives or time management, actual written examinations are given, as is done with students who are trained in shared leadership, group dynamics and consensus.

In the areas of programming, students are asked on a continuous basis to evaluate each of the programs. As a result, appropriate changes are made. Surveys to faculty, staff and students are distributed and analyzed so that change can be implemented.

Institutions have, as previously noted, researched the question of long-term effect. Employers and professional job placement counselors agree that students involved in student activities are better prepared to deal with their professional endeavors. These students are viewed as more organized, mature, responsible and better able to deal with the pressures and responsibilities of leadership. Institutional research departments are just beginning to pursue this area, as reflected in the NASPA Summer 1981 Journal article The Co-Curricular Transcript--What do Employers Think? A National Survey by William Bryan, Greg Mann, Robert Nelson and Richard North. Hopefully, additional hard data will be forthcoming.

Implications

As increased numbers of educators and administrators in institutions of higher learning accept student personnel services such as student activities as legitimate curricula and as essential ingredients to our educational mission, it is hoped that increased funding, staffing and other support systems would be forthcoming. If the academic significance of this area is understood and accepted by more faculty and administrations, a more total and complete learning environment for our students will be achieved.

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATION IN A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: ONE APPROACH

by Robert H. Gould
Director of Cooperative Education
Tompkins Cortland Community College

The value of experiential education to the career student has been well-established, as witnessed by the number and the endurance of engineering and business cooperative education programs in colleges throughout the country. In the liberal arts, realization of the value of co-op to the student has been more recently established, but it is now widely--though not universally--accepted.

In spite of its value, only seven two-year colleges in New York State are listed as 1982 members of the Cooperative Education Association, and only two are funded under Title VIII of the Higher Education Act for the 1982-83 academic year. This article is a very brief description of the co-op program at one of these--Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3).

While experiential education is not the central theme of the College plan of operation, as it is at, say, LaGuardia Community College, it has been, in some form, a part of career programs since the founding of the College. Its acceptance and inclusion in the liberal arts has been much more recent, but it now is available to liberal arts students.

Originally, experiential learning took the form of clinical experience in the Nursing Program and internships in Human Services and some of the office-related programs. In 1976, a Cooperative Education program was adopted, and, with the support since 1979 of the Department of Education, this is the form which experiential learning has now taken in twenty-three of the programs, including several in Liberal Arts/General Studies. In the programs in which internships were originally required, co-op is available, or planned, as an alternate in most of the programs offered at this College.

The Co-op Program, as it has evolved, is a highly flexible one, designed to meet the needs of the broad spectrum of students attending an open-admissions, comprehensive community college such as TC3, and of the community which it serves. The flexibility comes in the number of credits earned, in the number of work periods, and in pre-requisite conditions. The fact that a large majority of our Co-op students are on the parallel plan (class attendance and work experience during the same academic semester), means that conflicts between work and required classes are minimized and that schedules are not a serious problem. Also, the flexibility of our Co-op plan permits students to Co-op in any combination of work periods once the prerequisite requirements have been met. In one situation in which several students were working at a distance from TC3, courses which they required were offered on an independent study basis.

Originally, co-op experience was available only to matriculated students, but the need to serve shorter term--one or two-semester, certificate and special program--students soon became evident. To meet this need a new course, Coop 130, open to these students, was developed. It has proved to be very valuable to this group. With the addition of this newer course, flexibility in both credit hours and in prerequisite conditions is enhanced. Depending on the needs and interests of the student, the course and curriculum in which he/she is enrolled, and the number of hours worked, credit earned can vary from one to nine credit hours in one semester. Prerequisite conditions originally required at least a full semester at TC3 prior to any co-op work experience, as well as specific course requirements. Now, non-matriculated students can be placed after five weeks of their first semester.

The expansion of the number of programs in which co-op is available has been greatly accelerated by the federal Department of Education. The Co-op Program started in 1976, but the growth was slow until federal support enabled the College to press forward with new materials and new emphasis on the value of the co-op experience to TC3 students, both of which are necessary for the expansion of co-op. Because no one of the curricula offered at this College is very large, the key to increasing the number of students served comes in increasing the number of programs in which co-op is available. The addition of the Liberal Arts/General Studies curricula to those in which co-op is available, has opened a wide new area of student possibilities.

A recent development, which is an evidence of the flexibility of the Co-op Program, is the change which permits volunteer work under prescribed conditions. These conditions are:

(1) Non-profit employer
(2) Well-defined job description

(3) Well-defined, and adhered to, work schedule.

This permits students to follow their interests even though a salaried job in that field is not available. Though not frequently used, it has been, to date, useful to a few students.

The number of programs in which co-op is now available and the number of students served are the foremost indicators of effectiveness, but there are a number of others. A survey of the full-time teaching faculty of this College has just been completed. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the Cooperative Education Program. The response was very gratifying--100 percent of those who responded to the question agreed that the TC3 Cooperative Education program is a valuable learning experience for most of the students who participate.

Student evaluations of the TC3 Co-op Program have also been very favorable. Each student, as part of the required written work, is asked to evaluate all aspects of the experience--the job, the employer, his/her performance, and the co-op program. A summary of the students' responses for the past three years shows that 94 percent of these students felt that the co-op work experience did meet the objectives of the program. In response to the question, "What is your personal opinion of the Co-op Program?", 84 percent of the replies were favorable, 10 percent were unfavorable, and 6 percent were neutral or did not reply.

Employer reaction to the program has also been good. More than 140 employers have participated in the program, and we have lost less than five. Most employers are within the immediate commuting area of the College, but one, Disney World, is located in Orlando, Florida. Another, new this past summer, is a Fresh Air Fund Camp in Fishkill, New York, which has employed a student in Human Services.

Recruiters from Disney World first came to TC3 in the fall of 1981. They interviewed a number of students, made offers to 26, and 18 actually were employed there during the spring 1982 semester. Recruiters returned in April to hire students for the summer and fall work periods, and in September to recruit for next spring. They seem quite pleased with the TC3 Co-op Program and have been quite cooperative in meeting our Co-op requirements.

The benefits of the Cooperative Education Program to the College come in several areas:

(1) The students are better prepared for the work of their chosen field, which benefits not only themselves, but also enchances the stature of the College.

(2) Relations with employers and the community are improved by contacts with the students, with the faculty mentors, and with co-op office personnel. An advisory committee, composed of employers as well as faculty and staff, serves further to enhance this relationship.

(3) The faculty mentors benefit through contacts with employer personnel. In their visits to students at work they have an opportunity to see applications of their classroom efforts and to observe different and, possibly, new procedures and practices in their field.

(4) The retention of students is improved. In addition to the cognitive and affective benefits to students, the financial benefit of co-op frequently enables them to remain in college. It is a form of financial aid.

Tompkins Cortland Community College is typical in many ways of relatively small (1950 FTE), rural, comprehensive community colleges. The Cooperative Education Program which has been developed here could be adapted readily to the needs of other similar institutions throughout the country.

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"MAKE IT NEW": INTRODUCING POETRY THROUGH WRITING POETRY

by Shirley Lim
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The house of fiction has many windows, Henry James noted. Similarly, there are many approaches to teaching poetry. However, as one inquires into the various practices of the poetry class, one quickly becomes aware of a general constraint, the constraint set up by the anthology or text which the instructor selects for her course. We do not feel this constraint too sharply because most anthologies offer a wide range of poems covering many forms, periods, and voices. In a popular college anthology such as the Little Brown's Introduction to Literature, we find a selection of 130 poems, enough for most instructors, even the most contrary, to discover a few of their favorites and to find reflected there their notions of what constitutes good poetry.

The pedagogical practice of relying on a body of selected pieces, however, implies an attitude to teaching poetry which has hardened even more in the past few decades with the philosophy underlying new criticism. It would not be too off the mark to characterize the attitude as one of the keeper of the sacred texts; the instructor offers his students a number of classics which by their very definition are endowed, allegedly, with historical distance, tradition, and universality. Overtly or covertly, many English teachers hold to the ideal of poetry as touchstone, as the Grecian urn, that "foster child of silence and slow time." And we all recognize these teaching pieces, among them being Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess," T. S. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," or Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach."

At the same time, we admit that there has been a revolution in our classrooms. Through the past decade, even while their reading skills have been declining, our students have grown skeptical of the value of the humanities. They frequently enter our classes with more hours of creative writing and film study behind them than hours of reading literature. Most high school teachers spend more time on short stories, plays, and novels than on poetry. In short, the student to whom I have just assigned John Donne's wonderful poem, "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," may very well be reading at a tenth grade level, does not know the meaning of the term "metaphor" and cannot identify one, does not remember a single poem read in his senior year at high school, and is deeply cynical of the value of my reading assignment. Of course, it is possible to teach Donne's poem so as to lead this student through an experience of its dazzling linguistic play, the elegance of its wit, and the force of its emotional expression, but the odds are against my succeeding. Still, it is extremely difficult for most of us in this educational bind to give up our long-cherished notions of the canon in poetry to which we wish to introduce our students. Our training, our own cultivated tastes, even the anthologies we use dictate that we continue to teach the classics.

Some of us, however, are beginning to weary of this diet of classics. After years of teaching Introduction to Literature courses, we are weakening in the struggle to cover the short story, drama, poetry, and the novel comprehensively in ten to fifteen weeks; the sneaky notion that such comprehensiveness is an impossible assignment is beginning to plague us. Some of us may already have abandoned one the genres; we no longer teach the novel or drama or poetry. Or we spend two weeks on poetry and force-march our students through a combination of Robert Frost, Bob Dylan, and Ezra Pound. At this point it is clearly time for a reconsideration of our syllabus and our classroom practices. We may be ready now to set aside the anthology and to turn to our students' poems as text.

Given a non-literary student population, one fresh approach to introducing them to poetry is to have them write and analyze their own poems.[1] The most obvious disadvantage to this approach is that in the limited period of a semester the instructor will have to give up some of her more traditional objectives--for example, an understanding of poetic forms or a survey of individual talents in the tradition. Nonetheless, beginning an introduction to poetry with students' own poems as text has many advantages. It taps students' experiences and expressive potential with creative projects and gives them an immediate and direct relationship to the traditional published works. In writing poems themselves, students become aware at a visceral and intellectual level of many of the elements of poetry: the power of imagination, the uses of invention,

discipline of form, demands of rhythm, and so forth.

Substituting students' work as text, however, is a risky proposition, for sometimes students do not produce poetry that can be profitably analyzed. Students' work should be read together with published and traditional pieces in order to reinforce the instruction and critical thinking and to deepen students' literary sensibilities. Moreover, the instructor needs to guide students' efforts most artfully so as to insure the most felicitous results. A series of classroom exercises offered sequentially, I have found, can lead to striking results. The exercises I am about to describe owe much in inspiration to Kenneth Koch and his pioneering work with elementary school children and more recently with senior citizens;[2] however, I have taken Koch's original idea, the Romantic idea that everyone is capable of the fresh perceptions and expressive utterances of the poet, off on a different tangent. While subscribing to this Romantic notion, the chief goal of these exercises is to raise students' consciousness of poetic forms, devices, and diction; that is, the expectation of performance is that every student is capable of the analytical tasks of the critic.

The haiku is one of the best exercises for students being introduced to poetry. It is a small form which asks for concentration of effect together with economy of diction, and its conventions require an understanding of image and of suggested emotional statements. The classroom exercise begins with five minutes of meditation. After the room is darkened, students are told to sit back, close their eyes, and relax. Using traditional yoga techniques, they concentrate on deep breathing and gradually relax the various muscles of their body. When they are quiet and relaxed, they are asked to form a picture in their minds. They are urged to focus sharply on this scene, to select its dominant features, to use their five senses in looking at it, and then to discover their emotional responses to this image. Then the lights in the room come on, and the students free-write on the image they had just formed. They stop after they have written about a paragraph, select the most striking parts of their description, and arrange those keywords and phrases which most concretely express the picture they had imagined into two lines of five and seven syllables each. Finally, recalling the emotions that had accompanied that image, students are asked to express those feelings in a statement without using words which directly denote that feeling. This final statement, the last line of the haiku, should have no more than five syllables.

While students initially resist the exercise because the constraints of the five/seven/five syllabic form appear impossible for them to overcome, they quickly discover that the haiku is, in practice, a simple and enjoyable form. Many students come up with a fairly good haikus; for example:

Chipped paint on the door,
Cracked steps and overgrown lawn:
Maybe you're upstairs.

Kori Tolko

Chauffered in Caddy,
Sitting proudly and mighty:
Suburban poodle!

Diane Guida

The follow-up class is spent analyzing their haikus. Students are sometimes overwhelmed with pride when their work is mimeographed and discussed. Very quickly, they learn to identify images, to judge whether images are sharply and concretely conveyed, and to analyze how and what emotions are suggested. They learn to appreciate the indirect and subtle communication. Student poets will correct a glaring misinterpretation, recognize some point about their work that they themselves had not initially perceived, and provide the class with the dramatic context for their haikus. The class was informed, for example, that in the haiku first quoted, the person upstairs whom the student was thinking about was a grandmother whose house was on a street which the student would take everyday to and from school. After the grandmother's death, the student had observed the house gradually deteriorating and had been haunted still by the sense of the grandmother's presence in the house. Given this context, the class begins to appreciate the meaning of poet's intention and is able to discuss with more confidence the importance of diction in expressing that intention accurately and subtly.

Finally I conclude this lesson by summarizing for the students what elements of poetry the exercise has uncovered, specifically the primary function of imagination and the significance of image in poetry; the discipline required behind the use of any poetic form; and the importance of diction and compression of language for emotional expressiveness.

Another assignment which emphasizes the primary place of the imagination in poetry is the riddle poem. On this occasion, after the meditation period, students are asked to picture an object which is ordinary and commonplace and to concentrate on this object so that they see it in all its details. They are then asked to describe this object so as not to reveal its identity to the reader; the point of the assignment is not to fool the reader with a false description but to compel him to think in order to arrive at a fresh appreciation of the object. To prepare for this exercise, we read a few poems which contain fresh descriptions of everyday things; for example, Sylvia Plath's popularly anthologized poem, "Mushrooms" or May Swenson's well-known poem, "At Breakfast."[3]

At Breakfast

Not quite
spherical
White
Oddly closed
and without a lid

A smooth miracle
here in my hand
Has it slid
from my sleeve-

The shape
of this box
keels me oval
Heels feel
its bottom
Nape knocks
its top

Seated
like a foetus
I look for
the dream-seam

What's inside?
A sun?
Off with its head
though it hasn't any
or is all head no body
a
One

Neatly
the knife scalps it
I scoop out
the braincap
soft
sweetly shuddering
Mooncream
this could be
Spoon
laps the larger
crescent
loosens a gilded
nucleus
from warm pap
A lyrical food

Opened
a seemless miracle
Ate a sun-germ
Good

In analyzing Swenson's "At Breakfast," we observe how the poet used description which is both apt yet odd. We note her use of words which appeal to sight, touch and taste. The shell of the egg is described as a box without a lid; it is seen seated "like a foetus" and inside the shell is a sun, the braincap, Mooncream, a gilded nucleus, a lyrical food, a sun-germ good. All these similes, metaphors, epithets, are aimed at "making new" an ordinary domestic item. The poet's imagination, even when expressed in "difficult" language, compels his reader to arrive at fresh perspectives. In contrast, we discuss how cliches, stock responses, and stale descriptions interfere with a fresh perception of the world. In short, the goal of the riddle poem is to illuminate that function of poetry which Samuel Coleridge explained in talking of the Lyrical Ballads: "to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us."

A third assignment which underlines what Coleridge elsewhere called the "esemplastic" power of the imagination is writing the animal poem. It is useful to begin this exercise with posing some leading questions. For example, the class may begin by querying the notion of reincarnation. Students may be asked to give reasons for choosing the specific animals that they would return to life as; or they may discuss which animal they most resemble when they find themselves in certain situations. Reading out a list of domestic and exotic animals, birds, and insects can also help excite their imaginations. During the meditation, the students are asked to picture various animals, to focus on one animal the individual feels a close kinship to, and then to free-write a description of this animal. Students may produce a mythological creature or an imagined beast. After they have written for about fifteen minutes, they read their passages aloud and thence attempt to work them into some recognizable form, perhaps a ballad or a prose poem.

In the follow-up analysis, students are asked to explain the underlying relationship between the animal described and aspects of the writer's personability. For example, in this student's prose poem describing a pigeon in downtown New York:

Epitome of mobility!
Yet when you choose to land, you're always seen in the best of company.
I've seen you once, absorbing the warmth of Miss Liberty's flame. And, yes, that Saturday in the park, there you were chatting with Walt Whitman!
But I've seen you downtown too, under the Arch with the woman who carried all those bags. And while pecking about her feet, you displayed your willingness to make friends.
To the dismay of many you leave your mark wherever you go, but I'd like you to know it's not you they don't like. It's just the way you sign your name.
But what do you care? In the blink of an eye you're simply a child with an entire sky for a playground.

Carol Reesor

The class was able to analyze the pigeon's mobility, egalitarian friendliness, and child-likeness in relation to the writer herself. The chatty humor and urban setting in the poem were recognizable parts of the student's identity. As the discussion proceeded it became clear that in the writer's emphathy with this carefree, foot-loose city bird, she had created a symbol of herself. By the end of this lesson, students had begun to understand not only the denotative and expressive aspects of language but also its symbolic function.

The three exercises discussed so far emphasize imagery and concrete diction; students are led gradually from the interior eye of memory to an empathetic viewing of external objects and empathetic animals. The three following assignments will deal more with human relationships to allow students to

examine more serious and dramatic content.

A simple assignment which gets students to examine social relationships is the verse epitaph. To prepare for this exercise, during the meditation period, they are asked to recall someone to whom they have had a strong reaction: a rival in love, a rude storekeeper, an unpopular teacher. They are asked to imagine this person's personality, career, and life more fully and then to summarize their thoughts in such a way that their emotional response to this person is conveyed clearly. Students then shape this summary into the form of an obituary.

At this point, the instructor may begin an elementary description of the chief metrical patterns in English poetry to prepare students for rewriting their obituaries in the form of verse epitaph of two or four lines of tetrameters or decasyllables, rhyming aabb or abab or abba or abcb. Student's initial frustration with the assignment is soon overcome by reading a selection of caustic and humorous epitaphs. J. V. Cunningham's tightly organized "Epitaph for Someone or Other," for example:

> Naked I came, naked I leave the scene
> And naked was my pastime in between

raises their consciousness of satirical possibilities in their own observations, while Hilarie Belloc's "Epitaph on the Politician":

> Here richly, with ridiculous display,
> The politician's corpse was laid away.
> While all of his acquaintance sneered and
> slanged
> I wept: for I had longed to see him
> hanged.

reminds them of larger social themes available for biting commentary. In the follow-up analysis, as students discuss their verse epitaphs, they learn to identify forms and rhyme schemes. This is also an appropriate occasion to explain the different devices that make up the sound of a poem, for, in a tight form like the verse epitaph, alliteration, assonance, repeated sounds, onomatopoeia, euphony and cacophony become pronounced elements. Students enjoy the humor, sarcasm, irony, and satire in their pieces, all terms which bear enthusiastic scrutiny in reference to their own poems.

A more serious assignment attempts to show how poetry is also the medium through which poets arrive at self-understanding while teaching the uses of the persona and of dramatic monologues. In this exercise, students imagine that they have just met someone from their past, someone who knew them quite well and who has not seen them in a long while: a long-lost cousin, an aunt, ex-schoolmate, old playmate, a teacher or priest. During the meditation period they are asked to imagine a conversation between themselves and this person in which the person is responding to the students' present position in life. The person may be envious of, contemptuous of, pleased, surprise, saddened, shocked, or upset by the changes he or she notes in the student. Then students free-write the imagined conversation before shaping only the other's remarks and/or unspoken thoughts in the form of a dramatic monologue.

Through this exercise, the instructor is able to explain the concept of the persona, the choice of a voice other than the poet's own which functions as a kind of mask through which the poet views his world ironically. The use of the persona in the dramatic monologue allows student to examine how they have changed in time, as well as the personality of the other and the relationship that once existed between the writer and the other. Moreover, students learn at first-hand that beyond description, image, symbol, satire, or irony is still the domain of psychological and metaphysical drama, the tensions of the self experiencing itself in the world.

In the follow-up exercise, students analyze not only their own poems but also Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" and T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." It is surprising how writing their own dramatic monologues prepares students to better understand the ironical dimensions of the Duke's character and the psychopathic quality of this relationship with his Duchess when she was alive and even now when she was dead.

Students find it easier to appreciate the fine nuances of the Prufrock persona, to imagine the speaker and his situations as he painfully ponders the fragile limitations of his narrow and insecure world and yearns for some romantic apotheosis.

My last illustration of how to use student text to teach poetry is the ancient form of the parody. The parody, besides being a respectable sub-genre in literature, is itself a useful teaching device. As we all know, much learning occurs through imitation. When a student writes a parody of Archibald Macleish's "Ars Poetica," for example, she learns about varying stanzaic forms, couplets, imagery, alliteration, assonance, and so on. The class prepares for this assignment by reviewing the poem's formal features and by noting how the poem's unity is maintained through three different sections each with its own organization of imagery and thought. Then, it reads examples of parodies such as those of Christopher Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" by Sir Walter Raleigh, John Donne, and Delmore Schwarze. Specifically, the class analyzes how each poet seizes a widely different theme while imitating the original poem's form faithfully. In completing the assignment of parodying "Ars Poetica," one student wrote the following piece:

Ars Erotic

> Sex should be mystical and mute
> As a healthy root.
>
> Frolicsome
> as the dance of a sugarplum.

Allegro as the violins alive
In Beethoven's Symphony Number Five -

Sex should be unsped
As the baking of a gingerbread.

Sex should be moving in time
As the sun climbs,

Staying, as the sun releases
Leaf by leaf the day-drenched trees,

Staying, as the sun behind the rain-soaked
leaves,
Memories of love's pantomines -

Sex should be moving in time
As the sun climbs.

*

Sex should be a billet-doux:
Not taboo.

For all the history of love
An open door and a soaring dove.

For more love
Two leaning bodies and moonlight above the
bed.

Sex should not be starved
But fed.

Jacqueline Pons

As is apparent in this poem, the student has successfully understood rhythmic and rhyming patterns, imagery, alliteration, assonance, consonance, humor and wit, elements which can all be analyzed by the class vis-a-vis her poem. When such a parody is used as a text for analysis next to Macleish's poem, students' attention is immediately heightened, for the parody offers them a relevant subject using topical imagery in everyday English.

Finally, in this exercise as in all the others, students' pride in their creative efforts is the catalyst to provoking their analytical capabilities. Theodore Weiss said of the deconstructionist critic, Roland Barthes, that Barthes' shift from critic to author gave him "a stake in the imagination and the personal."[4] In a similar manner, when our students become poets, their stake in the imagination and the personal awakens their interest in criticism and gives them an immediate acquaintance with the tools of criticism.

Footnotes

[1] This approach was discussed briefly by Ronald Wallace in "Babble and Doodle: Introducing Students to Poetry," College English, Vol. 43, No. 6, October 1981, pp. 556-568.

[2] Kenneth Koch, Wishes, Lies, and Dreams (New York: Vintage Books), 1970.

[3] May Swenson, A Cage of Spines (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc.) 1958, p. 41.

[4] Theodore Weiss, review of Denis Donaghne's Ferocious Alphabet, New York Times Book Review, October 11, 1981, p. 35.

Dr. Shirley Lim, an associate professor at Westchester Community College, received a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from Bandeis University in 1973. Her first book of poems, Crossing the Peninsual (Heinemann Writing in Asia Series, 1980) won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize for 1980. Her collection of short stories, Another Country, (Times Books International, 1982) contains a short story which won second prize in the 1982 Asiaweek Short Story Competition, and another book of poems, Pigdin Lives, (National University of Singapore) is scheduled to appear in 1983. Dr. Lim, a recipient of a Wien International Fellowship and Fulbright, M.L.A., and N.E.H. Fellowships, was given the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1980 and is currently working on a novel. She has published in numerous anthologies and journals in Asia, Australia, and the United States.

BARRIERS TO THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS

by Howard C. Himelstein
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If present trends continue, community colleges will enroll a significantly greater proportion of foreign students seeking higher education in the United States. In a recent report by the Committee on Foreign Student and Institutional Policy of the American Council on Education (1982), it was projected that the ratio of full-time foreign students to full-time domestic students in two-year institutions will increase from 2 percent to more than 8 percent by the end of the decade. This projected increase in enrollment places a special responsibility on community colleges not only to provide high-quality academic programs and services, but also on the development of programs and activities that address the social and cultural needs of foreign students. If foreign students are not to complain of loneliness, lack of institutional interest and insensitivity experienced at U.S. colleges and universities (American Council on Education, 1982), then institutions of higher education must examine the quality of all the elements of the educational environment.

Integrating foreign students of a different cultural background into the existing social structure of a community college can be a difficult and frustrating experience for both the college and the students. This difficulty is in part attributable to the students and their culture and partially attributable to the college. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the factors that cause these difficulties and suggest possible remedies.

Factors Attributable to the Student

Foreign students frequently experience culture shock upon arrival in the U.S. Culture shock is experienced as feelings of discomfort and disorientation as the student attempts to comprehend and adapt to a different culture (Leininger, 1978). Often these feelings are dealt with by drawing closer to other foreign students--particularly from their own country--rather than risk developing close relationships with domestic students. Factors that intensity feelings of alienation among foreign students are often a noticeably different style of dress and appearance and fluency in a second language. Foreign students also arrive in the U.S. with a wide range in English proficiency. Although most new foreign students achieve a basic level of English language fluency, they lack the necessary skills to interact socially. Foreign students must quickly learn many new colloquialisms and the nuances of the English language if they are to follow what is being said and feel comfortable speaking informally to others. Lack of English language fluency can present a major stumbling block to the social interaction of foreign and domestic students.

Another factor that contributes to the isolation of foreign students from the social environment of the community college is their preoccupation with academic pursuits. The basis for this devotion is the fact that failure to achieve academic success could mean not only an end to their student status in the U.S., but the need to repay a large sum of money to the sponsoring government or corporation. Foreign students that are supported by relatives living in this country function under high expectations for achieving academic success and graduating in the shortest possible time period. In addition, it is not uncommon that there exists a clear expectation that the foreign student work part-time in the family business or in the upkeep of the host family's property. These expectations, while not unrealistic, tend to decrease the social interaction that foreign students have with their American counterparts.

Factors Attributable to the College

Although community colleges are increasingly recognized as valuable educational resources for foreign students, certain characteristics of two-year institutions do inhibit the social involvement of foreign and domestic students. Foremost is the absence of dormitories on the campuses of the vast majority of two-year colleges. This fact prevents foreign and American students from enjoying the highly interactive nature of dormitory life.

A second factor that often stifles the social interaction of foreign and domestic students is the limited participation of local students in the social and cultural opportunities offered by many community colleges. Typical community college students are very much a part of their community in that they continue to live at home and maintain former friendships and working arrangements. This situation, unfortunately, results in a lack of participation by many domestic students in the social and cultural programming on their campus. This, in turn, limits the opportunities for social interaction that foreign and

domestic students could enjoy outside of class.

Overcoming the Barriers

The factors enumerated above pose serious barriers to the social and cultural enrichment of both foreign and domestic students attending community colleges. Institutional policy must concern itself with the educational experience of the foreign student in its totality: the quality of the environment (American Council on Education, 1982).

A carefully designed orientation program can alleviate a considerable amount of the culture shock experienced by foreign students. A comprehensive orientation should emphasize nonacademic aspects of college as well as academic matters. Typically, an orientation for foreign students should include (1) pre-arrival information about the social and cultural resources of the college and community, (2) extracurricular activities such as social mixers, discussion of college clubs and organizations, and opportunities to interact with domestic and experienced foreign students, and (3) an "on-going orientation" that includes discussion of cultural differences and problems of adjustment (National Association of Foreign Student Affairs, 1980).

Another important method of fostering social interaction of foreign and domestic students is the development of an international student club. This type of club can be the focal point of a wide array of social and cultural activities, both on campus and in the surrounding area. In addition, an international club can also sponsor unique events on campus such as an international culture day, world hunger awareness, etc. As foreign students become more comfortable, the international club can become a springboard for students to join other campus-wide extracurricular activities.

The foreign student advisor can play a major role in the acceptance of the international student. The advisor can be instrumental in the development of a number of interesting activities that could increase the college community's awareness of the foreign students on campus. These activities could include the developing of a monthly international news and information forum, providing faculty with cultural information concerning foreign students in their classes, and organizing a "host family" program for foreign students during the holidays.

Finally, the academic program should not be overlooked as a means to address the social difficulties experienced by foreign students. Many community colleges have as a goal the internationalization of their curriculum. This goal can partially be achieved through the utilization of foreign students in wide array of courses dealing with international politics, foreign languages, geography, etc. This presents the domestic student with the opportunity not only to learn first-hand about course topics, but also the opportunity to initiate one-to-one discussions in and after class with their foreign classmates.

The barriers to the social and cultural integration of foreign and domestic students can be overcome with a concerted effort by the students and the institution. Occupational programs, low tuition, less stringent admission requirements, small class size, and individualized instruction are some of the reasons why foreign students elect to attend two-year colleges. If a community college chooses to accept foreign students, it must assume certain continuing obligations to address the social and cultural needs of foreign students as well as offering unique academic resources and programs.

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CAREER GUIDANCE FOR THE MEDIA MAJOR

by Ann Catalano-Broughton
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Radio Announcer, Advertising Copywriter, Public Relations Practitioner, Television Director, Journalist: These are among the careers for which the Communications/Media Arts Program of Niagara County Community College attempts to prepare its students. Even with growing video technology and expanded facilities, the competition for jobs remains keen. To be successful in this field, one must be confident, experienced, and persistent. The CMA program tries to develop these qualities in its graduates through a planned career guidance project.

The Communications/Media Arts curriculum is a liberal arts-based program. The CMA graduate may transfer to a four-year institution and earn a Bachelor's Degree or gain enough experience through the two-year program to seek a job upon obtaining an Associate of Science degree. According to an NCCC graduate study (1978-1981), 58.5 percent of the CMA graduates opt to continue their education, while 23.2 percent seek or obtain immediate employment.

The faculty of the CMA program is committed to providing a realistic view of the communications field. Because this career field is so competitive, it is vitally important that the students are keenly aware of the career they are pursuing. The field of communications is too often glamorized. Many students have the idea it is easy work, minimum hours, and top salaries. They see personalities like Barbara Walters making millions of dollars just for asking people questions and, consequently, they decide this is the career for them.

It has become a priority of the program to help the students understand the basic nature and scope of communications careers. In a sense, the faculty tried to "demythify" the careers available in communications. By exposing students to updated career information and practicing professionals, the CMA program strives to assist them in developing intelligent, realistic educational and career goals. The approach taken is simple: Provide an individualized experience within the context of an existing course.

This individualized experience takes place in CMA 3600-Mass Media I, a required introductory course for all majors. Instead of mandating a traditional college research project, the instructor assigns a Media Careers Paper. This assignment involves an investigation of a specific career option, for example, photojournalism. The format and structure of the paper is traditional so that students gain experience in writing while utilizing nontraditional resources to explore a more personalized subject.

There are three elements involved in the research gathering process. Students acquire their information by: 1) researching existing resources about media careers, 2)interviewing a media professional, and 3) completing the SIGI (System of Interactive Guidance and Information) program.

In the first step, researching existing resources, students may choose from a variety of materials. Pamphlets and articles (For example: "Romantics in the Newsroom" by Melvin Mencher[1] or Women on the Job: Careers in Broadcasting[2]) have been gathered from various media organizations and periodicals. Additionally, information from such media-related unions as AFTRA and The Newspaper Guild have been acquired. Through a college-funded instructional grant, questionnaires were collected from media industry professionals concerning the requirements of their jobs and their advice to hopeful communications students. All of these materials, along with two videotapes on Broadcasting careers produced by the author and the Instructional Support Services staff, are made available to students on a reserve basis through the Library Learning Center. Students may seek additional data through books such as Career Opportunities in Television and Video by Maxine Kay and Robert W. Reed,[3] available in the Library Learning Center or a community library. The Counseling and Career Planning Center also houses career guidance materials which students often find useful.

To encourage students to talk with someone in their chosen field and at the same time give students an opportunity to practice interrogating skills, the second step, a personal interview, is required. Students are given a set of suggested questions developed by the Counseling and Career Planning Center staff. The questions focus on the main topics of the Media Careers Paper: job responsibilities, fringe benefits, educational expectations, and the like. Through conducting the personal interview, students establish for themselves a local media contact, obtain first-hand information and advice, and learn to acquire material in a face-to-face setting.

The third step of the research gathering process for this project involves the completion of the SIGI (System of Interactive Guidance and Information) program. SIGI was obtained by the college through a Vocational Education Act grant. This computerized program provides students with easy access to current information about many different careers. It also is designed to assist students in a values assessment used to determine the types of careers which match the student's inherent values and goals for the future. The program takes between two and five hours of out-of-class time to complete. By taking students through five stages (Values, Locate, Compare, Planning, and Strategy), the SIGI program develops both the students' awareness of self and their decision-making abilities regarding career goal setting. This program has a secondary benefit in that it gives students practical experience on equipment very similar to that which they may encounter in a communications career, for example, a visual display terminal.

After students complete all three steps of the research gathering process, they then utilize the acquired information to write the Media Careers Paper. The requirements for the paper direct the students to examine their choice objectively and subjectively. After discussing the factors that influenced their career choice, students analyze the specific career in a realistic manner. They are expected to show the various requirements, attributes, and responsibilities for the career as well as the projected availability for positions. The conclusion of the paper includes a discussion of their "fitness" for the career. Students are asked to determine if, after researching the topic, they feel capable of success in the field, and to explain why they have reached this conclusion.

The Media Careers Paper has been designed to help Communications/Media Arts majors take an honest look at their career goals. If through researching and writing the paper a student decides to change his/her curriculum or transfer into another upon graduation, the project has proved useful. It has alerted the student early in his/her college career of a change in ambition. If a student continues and eventually graduates with a degree in communications, the project will have helped in planning his/her college courses to best obtain the experience and education needed in his/her chosen field. The project also serves to expose students to the variety of career options in communications of which they are not commonly aware, for example, industrial television.

Students always complain about term paper assignments. They perceive them as a waste of time, for they do not see the value of researching some "dry" topic in books or periodicals. However, this assignment is different. It involves a topic with which they cannot help but be personally involved: their career and their future. Dual objectives are therefore achieved: 1) students develop the writing, researching, and interviewing skills they need as communications majors specifically, and as college students in general, and 2) students improve their ability to make intelligent career choices and plan for their futures. Students completing this assignment have even added notes that they found the task enjoyable and one truly beneficial to their development. It is a project well worth incorporating in any curriculum.

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A STRATEGY FOR MASTERY LEARNING IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION

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I know how unfashionable it is to write about a structure approach to teaching English Composition. I am also aware of some of the benefits to many students of automatic writing, writing as process, finding one's voice, etc. However, my experience with community college students tells me most of them need and welcome a step-by-step approach to a writing assignment. Built into the method I use is a process of self-awareness and logic of which many had previously been incapable. Knowing exactly what they are expected to do is not limiting, but freeing. I am convinced that almost everyone can learn to write clearly, concisely and logically if given enough time, specific small objectives, and something to say. According to James Block (Mastery Learning Theory and Practice, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971, p. 4) "by breaking a complex behavior down into a chain of component behaviors and by ensuring student mastery of each link in the chain, it would be possible for any student to master even the most complex skills." To facilitate the process of Mastery Learning, the teacher's function is:

> To specify what is to be learned, to motivate pupils to learn it, to provide them with instructional materials, to administer these learning materials at a rate suitable for each pupil, to monitor students' progress, to diagnose difficulties and provide proper remediation for them, to give praise and encouragement for good performance, and to give review and practice that will maintain pupil's learning over long periods of time. (Carroll, John, "Problem of Measurement, Related to the Concept of Learning Mastery," Education Horizons, 48 No. 3, 1970, 71-80).

To make this paper useful for others, I will describe the way I try to achieve these objectives with my English Composition classes.

What is to be Learned

The first task to be mastered by each student is to write a thesis statement which answers a question by incorporating the question in the answer. For example, if the question is:

> On a scale of one to ten (ten being the highest), how do you rate your decision to come to Rockland Community College?

The thesis statement might be:

> On a scale of one to ten (with ten as the highest), I rate my decision to come to Rockland Community College a seven.

The second task is to supply three pieces of supporting evidence, each stated in a separate sentence. The third task is to state one's emotional reaction to what has been said. The process in which the student is engaged is:

> What do I think? Why do I think it? How do I feel about it?

The product might look like this:

> On a scale of one to ten (with ten being the highest), I rate my decision to come to Rockland Community College a seven. It is not nearly as expensive as most other schools. The teachers are far better than I had expected. I have an opportunity to improve my grades and transfer to a good four-year college when I finish. It is encouraging to have this to look forward to, but I'm not that pleased at having to live at home for two more years.

Students sometimes take several weeks to distinguish between a feeling and an idea. Some have problems, for a while, keeping their supporting evidence directly related to the thesis statement. Most, however, are ready to move on to the next task by the end of three or four weeks. This is the writing of the second paragraph which begins with a restatement, in a somewhat different way, of the second sentence of the first paragraph. This restatement becomes the topic sentence of the second paragraph and is followed by an example which illustrates it. The second paragraph might read like this:

> Most private and public four-year colleges are outrageously costly. Several of my friends are going away to school. Those going to branches of the State University will have to spend from three to six thousand dollars a year. My next door neighbor goes to a private college, and it costs her more than ten thousand when she includes her room and board. Rockland Community College, on the other hand, costs less than one thousand, and I am able to continue to live at home and keep my job.

The third and fourth paragraphs are developed in the same way, using restatement of the third and fourth sentences of the first paragraph as topic sentences. Most students have difficulty distinguishing between examples and explanations. Therefore, the next task to be mastered is the ability to give examples and explanations. Therefore, the next task to be mastered is the ability to give examples which are rich in detail and clearly illustrate the supporting evidence stated in the topic sentences of the second, third, and fourth paragraphs.

Students are instructed to use examples which come from their own experiences. Experiences derived from the following:

1. something they have seen; 2. something they have done; 3. something they have read; 4. something they have heard; and 5. something they have imagined.

The fifth and final paragraph is an explanation of their reaction. It begins with a topic sentence which is a restatement of the fifth sentence of the first paragraph. The explanation is usually easily mastered because the desire to explain has been building up as they learn to resist the impulse to do this in the three preceding paragraphs.

The format which students have mastered can be outlined in the following way:

Paragraph I,	sentence 1.	Thesis Statement
	sentence 2. }	Supporting
	sentence 3. }	Evidence
	sentence 4. }	
	sentence 5.	Reaction Statement
Paragraph II,	sentence 1.	Topic sentence based on first piece of supporting evidence. Rest of paragraph--detailed, specific example.
Paragraph III,	sentence 1.	Topic sentence based on second piece of supporting evidence. Rest of paragraph--detailed specific example.
Paragraph IV,	sentence 1.	Topic sentence based on third piece of supporting evidence. Rest of paragraph--detailed specific example.
Paragraph V,	sentence 1.	Topic sentence based on reaction. Rest of paragraph--detailed explanation of reaction.

The next task is to learn to use transitional words and phrases to connect the sentences of the first paragraph and to move from one paragraph to another, and the final task involves the elimination of individual writing problems in areas such as spelling, sentence structure and inappropriate use of second person.

How Pupils are Motivated

Most students would like to be able to express themselves more clearly and effectively in writing and are self-motivated. The teacher's task is to reassure them that this kind of improvement is not only possible but likely to occur. They are also receptive to the promise that they will develop better insight into what they think and how they feel, and the ability to communicate those thoughts and feelings so they can be understood by others.

Although most of the current theories of teaching composition are opposed to grading, especially at the beginning of the learning experience, I have found grades to be a useful tool for motivating students. Most students think of grading in English as a mysterious process of which they are the victims. It is important to eliminate the mystery and make the grading of composition as simple and standardized as the grading of a math exam. Therefore, I use the following formula:

When students are working on the first paragraph, each sentence is worth twenty points and is graded on how well it does its job. If a thesis is unclear or incomplete, points are deducted. If the supporting evidence is not logically related to the thesis, or the fifth sentence expresses an idea instead of a feeling, the grade reflects this. Spelling and usage errors cost one point each. Sentence fragments or run-on sentences cost five points. Lack of clarity results in a loss of three points. All papers are written in class and the use of dictionaries and reference material is encouraged. Students write every week and are permitted to do up to three make-up papers out of class. These receive careful reading and commentary and eliminate a zero for a missed paper, but do not receive a grade. Because students stay with each task until they have mastered it, the higher grades they receive as they approach mastery counterbalance the ones received when they began the task. An average of all grades makes up one-third of the final grade. Another third comes from class discussion and the last third is the grade of a final composition written at the end of the course. I have used this grading system with many hundreds of students and as far as I know none has found it unfair or confusing, and rarely does anyone become discouraged by it.

Instructional Materials

It is very difficult to write if one has nothing one wants to say. I find it necessary, therefore, to spend a good part of each week in class discussion of controversial, timely, and interesting material. For this purpose, the "Science" section of the New York Times has proven very useful. In addition to providing excellent material for class discussion, it serves as a model of good writing (most of the time) and helps students build their vocabularies--another thing most are eager to do. Students are required to buy the New York Times each Tuesday and read the first six pages of the "Science" section. They are expected to look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary which they are also required to buy.

Additional Instructional Materials

These are supplied or suggested in response to specific needs of individual students. If someone has a severe spelling problem, I frequently recommend Spelling Your Way to Success (Mersand and Griffith, Barron's Educational Services, New York: 1974) and assign appropriate portions. Most individual problems are dealt with during conference hours. I have found this one-to-one attention the most effective way to help a student who is stuck at one level of mastery to move on to the next one. Some students require an individual conference each time they take on a new task.

A Rate Suitable for Each Student

Each student is told on his or her paper when it is time to move on to the next task. The instructions about a new task are given to the class as a whole and everyone is urged to take notes for the time when they will be ready to move on. In a subject like English Composition, many students do not achieve one hundred percent mastery before the semester ends. The final grade, therefore, indicates the degree of mastery which has been achieved by each student. Ideally, a student would continue in the course until, and only until, he or she has mastered the material. This, however, would necessitate dramatic changes in the way we give college credits.

At the beginning of the first semester, a questionnaire was administered to all of my students in English Composition. These students were self-selected and represented a random sample. In general, they recognized that their writing needed improvement. In response to the question of "Why have you enrolled in English?" the highest percentage (66 percent) indicated that they enrolled to improve/develop their skills in writing. The next highest group (56 percent) enrolled because it is a requirement. Students who enrolled in the Mastery Learning sections of English 101 were not aware that a new teaching technique was going to be used. The largest percentage (59 percent) selected these particular sections by the time of day at which the classes were being offered, or because it fit into their schedules (13 percent). Some (19 percent) made their choice because of the instructor.

To determine the long-range usefulness of this teaching technique, I kept most of the students for the second semester of English Composition. In this course, students read selections from various literary genres and use these works as subjects about which to write. Most students continued to improve their mastery of this writing technique. To demonstrate their improvement, I have included the final papers of two students from first and second semesters. The question the first semester was:

> Have you learned anything useful about yourself and/or your world in this course?

The second semester question was:

> Has the literature we have read and discussed this semester caused you to reexamine any of your values? Use examples from three different literary genres to support your thesis.

This is the first semester paper of Susan D. for which she received a grade of "B." Each sentence and paragraph does its job clearly and logically. There are very few mechanical errors and the essay is unified and well-organized.

(82)

I have learned many useful things about myself and my world through this course. Firstly, I have learned to write better and more clearly. Secondly, the weekly articles that we read usually related to my life in some way. Lastly, I have learned that it is acceptible to use my own opinion in both compositions and class discussions. Overall, I have been fortunate in getting this class and have learned more than I anticipated. -2

As I stated, it is much easier for me to write an understandable composition now that I have taken this course. In my previous high school compositions I always tried to "bull" my way through the paragraphs. This always worked, however, I am more comfortable about writing when the "bull" isn't necessary. example lacks details -10

Another way I have learned is through the weekly articles. These articles always related to my life in some way. One that stands out in my mind is the one on doctors. The article had dealt with anesthetics and had an underlying meaning about how much doctors still don't know. The main think I learned through this article and the discussion was that doctors are not infallible. This is something I hadn't thought about, although it is important and true. -1

As I said before, this course taught me to use my own opinions in discussions and writing. This is important to me because it makes things more interesting when truthful opinions are expressed. An example of this was the unit on Bruce Springsteen. Many people in the class didn't like his music, and said so. This openness did not make me feel compelled into taking the opinion of the instructor when writing a paper on him, to get a better grade. clarity -3

explanation lacks details -2

In closing, I have learned a great deal of useful information in this course and am happy with the results. To be able to write a paragraph or a composition that people will understand is important to me and now I am more capable of expressing my ideas in writing.

Susan D.'s second semester paper received a "B+." In addition to good structure and a minimum of mechanical errors, it demonstrates good understanding of the material.

(88)

-3

Throughout this semester, the literature that we have read and discussed has made me look at my own life and reexamine my own values. For example, "Death of a Salesman" showed how lies and impossible dreams can destroy people. In a less tragic way, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" showed how always fantasizing about being someone, something or somewhere else can be a waste of life. Finally, the literary work that had the greated effect on me was "The Death of Ivan Illych" because of its comments on life. Most of the literature we have read was depressing, however, it has had a positive effect on me because it forced me to reexamine my own thoughts and values.

-1

In "Death of a Salesman" the Loman family is destroyed because of the lies and impossible dreams that they have for each other. An example of this would be how Willy really believes Biff will finally be somebody when he receives the insurance money. He does not realize that these false hopes and the hypocrisy that existed when Biff was young actually held Biff back from reaching his potential. This play made me realize that impossible dreams, especially if they aren't your own, go nowhere.

Another example of how dreams can waste a life is, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." In this short story the main character is constantly fantasizing to escape the dreary reality of his own life. In my own life, I find myself daydreaming or fantasizing because it is easier than taking the initiative to change something. However, too much daydreaming can only lead to disappointment when reality sets in, whereas a conclous effort to change a situation can leave a feeling of satisfaction.

example not specific enough -5

Finally, "The Death of Ivan Illych" made me reexamine my thoughts on many things, including how people should live their lives and also on dying. To read about the changes Ivan Illych goes through in the last few weeks of his life was very enlightening. This novel really made me reconsider the way money affects us and how the quest for it can be so terrible.

explanation weak -3

All of these literary works have proved to be both useful and interesting in my life, although they are not contemporary. This illustrates the old saying of how times can change but people don't. It makes me realize that the terrible things that happened so many years ago in Ivan Illych's life could happen in my own today.

Nancy J. received a "C" on her first semester final paper. The first example is weak and there are numerous errors in usage.

(70)

-3

I have learned something about myself in this course; I learned that I can go to school simply for the fun of it. Perhaps it is because I have no feeling of what road I'm going to choose when I leave. Another might be because this course did not presure me into doing things I didn't want to do. Another very important reason is I've learned to express my self in a logical manner. I feel great that I have taken this course it's one of the best things I could have done this year!

example not specific -10

For example I actually enjoy studying and going to school. I've realized I am young and I don't have to decide what I'm going to do for the rest of my life. I get good grades because of this feeling and it encourages me to do better.

example lacks details

-3

-3

Another reason for learning is because of low presure on the part of the instructor. I felt it was a casual class where I could say what I wanted to say without being contradicted by the teacher. I didn't have to "cram" the night before the test which set my mind at ease. Not that I didn't work hard, I just felt relaxed and could set my mind free to let my knowledge and feelings out on paper.

example not clearly related to topic sentence

-8

-2

One of the most important reasons is that I've learned to express my self properly on paper. I never though I'd be able to do this! The irony is that it's so simple I could have done it years ago, with the proper instruction. One of my papers now would never have been accepted in my high school class. I had to re-submit a paper so many times, it could have been written by the teacher himself. In this class I never had to re-submit anything. I was also given the attention I needed to not re-do my papers, but correct the errors before I made them.

-1

I feel great about this course. I'm so glad I took it because I've learned to admire the woman and not a man. My teacher is wise and just to share in her wisdom makes me feel good. It makes me enthusiastic that someday I may be as wise as she. I realized I will never be able to do this unless I go to school, learn and be happy about it!

Her second semester final paper has detailed examples and far fewer mechanical errors. It received a "C+."

78

-4

The works we have read this semester have made me think about my values and change them for the better. For example, in "The Death of Ivan Illych", I realized that money and power doesn't don't necessarily bring one happiness. Another example would be "Death of a Salesman", Will's occupation is said to be a respectable one, but he is not happy and would have been better off working with his hands. The last example would be "The Pawnbroker" because when I saw all the pain this man went through, it touched me so that I felt I had no right to feel depressed about my own life. I feel so good about learning through literature like this, because it only makes me all the more ~~wiser~~, and that's what I strive for!

-1

In the "Death of Ivan Illych", Ivan thought the only way to be was to conform to what society said to be right. I too felt as Ivan did, that one goes to school to learn a profession, graduates and works for material things. But I listened and questioned that idea, and found it not to be so right. People so often ask, "What are you going into"? I, almost embarassed, would make up a major that was acceptable. But after this story I just say, - "learning!" I know eventually I will have to make a decision, but now it will be one that makes me happy.

example not clearly related to topic sentence

-8

In "Death of a Salesman" Willy was never happy doing what he did; he would have been better off working with his hands. Before this story I most likely would have looked down on someone who was a carpenter, or construction worker, or hairdresser. Now it is all different, I've realized if it makes them happy then "more power to them." The people who do things they want to do are the happiest and live the longest. Just because one never affords a Rolls Royce doesn't mean they should be condemned. I am going to try to practice this idea for the rest of my life.

example not specific enough

-8

"The Pawnbroker" is a movie I will never forget. After I saw it I actually felt guilty about worrying whether I would pass my economics test! I've realized how very lucky I am. I have a wonderful family, and beautiful home. I'm free to work where I want and play where I want. When I get depressed all I have to think about is all the suffering Mr. Nazerman and his family went through and I can appreciate what I have.

My goal in life is to be wise, the more I read and stay in school, the closer I get to where I want to be. It was said at

transitions are weak

the start of the semester that much is learned through literature. I never understood that until now, I want to know many things, and I have far to go. I am so very glad that I took this English course because it has made me think about many things I probably wouldn't have if I didn't. I'm almost sorry to see it end! Though I am content and eager to continue the learning process for the rest of my life!

Most students continued to use the skills they had mastered the preceding semester. As their confidence grew, almost all of the papers improved. Many said they were using the technique in other courses with favorable results. One might think the papers would be so much alike that they would be deadly dull to read. This, however, did not happen. Within the same framework, there is room for individual expression and style.

At the end of the first semester, eighty-eight students did evaluations on the course. This evaluation form was a general one administered to all students in all courses. There were, however, several questions which gave me information about how well I was achieving some of my objectives in the Mastery Learning approach to English Composition. One hundred percent said they would recommend it to a friend and ninety-six percent rated the instructor's presentation above average or outstanding. Responses to specific questions were as follows:

The instructor

1. presented material in a clear and logical manner
   always 73, usually 14

2. demonstrated course relationships to practical situations
   always 62, usually 22

3. designed the course to fit the level of student understanding
   always 68, usually 19

4. established learning objectives for the course
   always 72, usually 15

5. informed students of the system of grading for the course
   always 76, usually 11

6. offered fair and constructive evaluations of student performance
   always 65, usually 23

7. showed concern with whether or not the students learned the material
   always 56, usually 30

8. was aware of individual differences in student ability
   always 63, usually 20

9. treated students with respect
   always 71, usually 16

10. was readily available for consultation with students
    always 72, usually 14

11. motivated me to do my best work
    always 64, usually 23

Because my own responses to this method of teaching English Composition are as positive as those of my students, I will continue to use it and encourage others to do so, too.

Joan Silberman has been teaching at Rockland Community College since 1968. In 1960, the parent of two school-age daughters, she returned to school and earned the A.A. at Rockland Community College. In 1965 she received a B.A. from St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill and has served on that institution's Board of Trustees for the past ten years. Her Master's degree is from New York University Graduate School of Arts and Science. In addition to her teaching, Mrs. Silberman is deeply involved in the National Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign and is coordinator of the Rockland Chapter.

READING/STUDY SKILL COURSES: AN EFFECTIVE COURSE REVISION PROCESS

by Diane Creel
Instructor of Reading

and

Marlene Blumin
Professor, Coordinator of Basic Skills Development
Tompkins Cortland Community College

The underlying philosophy of the Developmental Studies Program at Tompkins Cortland Community College is that the program is, in fact, developmental. We define the term "developmental" to mean that we begin instruction at the student's present skill level and enable him or her to strengthen those skills and to develop additional skills needed to succeed in future college courses.

The reading/study skill courses in the Developmental Studies Program included a one-credit course in rate improvement, a one-credit course in study skills, and a three-credit course in vocabulary, comprehension and study skills. The reading faculty felt that these course offerings addressed the essential skills necessary for the students enrolled in our college.

Yet the reading faculty in the Developmental Studies Program experienced a growing dissatisfaction with its reading/study skills course offerings. The three-credit course showed limited growth in student enrollment, the study skills course was decreasing in enrollment, and the rate improvement course was no longer offered due to low enrollment. We also were faced with classes that included students with a wide range of reading ability, and we were concerned that we were not meeting the needs of the students at the extreme ends of that range. We were concerned that we had come to focus on correcting reading deficiencies rather than on developing skills students already possessed. We were concerned about whether students were transferring reading/study skills developed in our courses to other courses they were taking. Furthermore, we felt that with the present economic situation we would experience an increase in enrollment of students who would elect to attend a two-year institution and then transfer to a four-year institution and that the present courses might not meet the needs of those students.

In the fall of 1982 the reading faculty undertook an intensive course examination. The result of that examination was a complete revision of the reading program into a five-course design that offers flexibility for the student and greater opportunity for the reading staff to become true developmental educators.

The first step in the examination procedure was to gather information about the students enrolled in the reading courses. We needed to know what students wanted from the courses and other pertinent information about the students taking the courses. A questionnaire was used to determine the attitude of students toward the courses, the specific skills covered in the courses, and skills not presently offered that could be included. Students were also asked to state their reasons for taking the courses, the academic program they were enrolled in, and their educational goals.

We also needed to know the reading skill levels of the students taking the course. This information was obtained from the standardized diagnostic reading test which was administered to all students taking reading courses. The results were coded on the questionnaire so that responses could be grouped and interpreted by student skill levels.

Next we looked at the present courses to see how well they were meeting the needs and expectations of the students at all skill levels. We also wanted to find out how the course overlapped or supplemented the English, math, and psychology courses offered in the Developmental Studies Program. By examining course syllabi and outlines and meeting with other faculty in the Developmental Studies Program, we identified the students for whom the courses were intended, the student needs met by the courses, the written and implied course objectives, and the relationship of the reading courses to other Developmental Studies courses. This enabled us to identify duplication of topics and guided us in sequencing topics so that the courses in the Developmental Studies Program would supplement and reinforce each other.

The third step in the examination process was to identify courses in the college curriculum which were reading-based, and program courses our students were taking concurrently or in subsequent semesters. The reading faculty met with the faculty teaching these courses to discuss the review process and to give them a checklist of skills and topics covered in the reading courses. They were asked to identify those that they felt were necessary to meet their stated course objectives and to list any skills they felt were needed for their courses but not presently taught in the reading courses.

Using the information obtained in the assessment of student and faculty needs, we then were prepared to design the ideal reading courses for our college. At this point we did not allow ourselves to be constrained by logistics and mechanics. We were interested only in designing a course that would meet student needs in the present semester and subsequent semesters. Taking the reading skills which had been identified as essential, we categorized them into six skill groups: decoding skills, literal comprehension skills, inferential comprehension skills, study skills, critical reading skills, and rate improvement.

One of the characteristics we felt an ideal course should have is that it be appropriate for students on all skill levels. It had been the feeling of the reading faculty that the present reading courses met the needs of the students with lower skills more satisfactorily than it met the needs of the students with average or above average skills. This was confirmed by the students themselves on the student survey. The students on the lower skill levels had the more positive reaction to the existing reading courses.

It was also felt that the ideal courses should be flexible enough so that the students could enter at a level appropriate to their skills. The courses should not require all the students to proceed in lock step fashion through the same sequence of instruction. A further characteristic of the ideal course is that it allow students to enter it after the semester started. We had discovered that students who had experienced difficulty in their courses and wished to improve their reading skills were discouraged when they were told they must wait until the next semester to take the reading course. Finally, it was felt that the ideal course should allow students with poor reading skills additional instruction in basic skills before they moved on to the intermediate skills for which they were unprepared.

We were now ready for the fifth step in the examination process: designing the realistic course. We decided on a modular format and created five one-credit reading courses, each of which would last five weeks:

1. Basic Reading and Vocabulary Skills

   This course is intended for students who need basic skill improvement. Emphasis is placed on improving reading comprehension of main ideas and details stated in sentences and paragraphs and improving vocabulary skills: word parts, context clues, and dictionary usage.

2. College Reading Skills

   This course is designed to help students improve reading skills necessary for the mastery of college textbooks and other written course materials. Emphasis is placed on comprehension of stated and implied main ideas and primary and secondary details, recognition of organizational patterns and technical vocabulary, and reading graphic materials.

3. College Study Skills

   This course is designed to provide improvement in study habits and attitudes for all students. Emphasis is placed on developing effective note-taking skills, exam-taking skills, and study methods for use in courses of all disciplines.

4. Critical Reading Skills

   This course is designed to help students improve their interpretive and evaluative reading skills. Emphasis is placed on summarizing, drawing conclusions, separating fact and opinion, using organizational patterns as an aid to comprehension, and recognizing points of agreement and disagreement.

5. Rate Improvement

   This course is designed to provide improvement in reading rates. Emphasis is placed on developing a variety of reading rates such as skimming and scanning and adapting them appropriately for achieving the reading purpose.

Having determined the content of each of the five courses, we next wrote instructional objectives for each skill and topic covered by the course. Each objective contained a description of what the student was to do and the standard by which his or her performance was to be evaluated. We discovered that writing the objectives for each skill focused and clarified our thinking about what we were teaching and what we expected the student to learn.

We scheduled sections of the courses so that students could begin the classes at the sixth and/or the eleventh week of the semester as well as at the beginning of the semester. This allowed students to enroll as a result of a need they perceived or as a result of a faculty recommendation.

Finally we designed a course evaluation form for students. In addition instructors were asked to evaluate each objective in the courses they taught by addressing the method by which the objective was met, whether the objective was realistic, and whether the intent of the objective had been accomplished. These two evaluation forms will be the basis for future revision of the courses.

Students are advised into a sequence of courses based on their scores on the college placement test. In the first week of the course, all students are given standardized reading tests. That score is used to determine whether the student has been placed in the most appropriate reading courses.

The examination process was a difficult and at times agonizing experience. However, we feel that it was immensely valuable. As a result of the course revisions, the enrollment in reading/study skill courses has increased over previous semesters. During the evaluation process students indicated an awareness of the usefulness of the skills learned in their reading or study skills course and the application of those

skills to their content area courses. We emerged from the process with a course designed that allows us to group our students according to their skill level. All students receive instruction appropriate for them and are not required to master skills they are not ready for or to focus on skills they have already mastered. In short, we are truly able to meet the students where they are and enable them to go where they need to be.

Marlene Blumin is a Professor at Tompkins Cortland Community College. She holds a B.S. in Human Development/Early Childhood Education and M.S. in Reading Education from Syracuse University. She has also done work in instructional development at Syracuse University and Cornell University. In 1974 she began teaching reading and study skills at TC3 and has published texts for use in her courses. As Coordinator of Basic Skills Development, she is responsible for coordinating the Developmental Studies Program and developing basic skills across the curriculum.

Diane Creel is an instructor at Tompkins Cortland Community College. She holds a B.A. in English and M.S. Ed. in Secondary Education Reading from Southern Illinois University. Before coming to TC3 she taught at Ithaca College and Cornell University. Since 1978 she has taught reading and study skills courses. Diane has also published a basic reading/ vocabulary text for use in a course she teaches.

THE NEXT THING AFTER READING

by Harold Ettelt
Assistant Dean for Library Services
Columbia-Greene Community College

Once you learn how to read, the next most important thing you can learn is how to find what you want or need to read.

That may seem an axiomatic statement, too self-evident to be denied, and yet it was and still is being denied in many colleges. We are still graduating students who are inept at, or incapable of, finding what they need or want to read. We are still so concerned that we "cover" a given body of course material that we do not concern ourselves with ensuring students have those skills that will allow carrying on beyond the coursework into lifelong learning. We hand out what is to be learned and when the courses are over and there is no one left to hand out what should be learned, the gradual process of unlearning begins.

We should be creating independent lifelong learners, explorers who can carve out their own paths and clearings in the jungle of ignorance. Instead we are creating dependent greenhorns who huddle in the last clearing to which we brought them, unable to go further on their own.

That is not a necessary condition. Students can be taught those skills and all of us are responsible for seeing it is done. It is not the English faculty, or the librarians, or the high schools who must do it. It is us.

That does not mean that any single one of us must do the instructing entirely alone. It does mean that every single one of us must cooperate in the enterprise. Each college must commit itself to that aim and, indeed, it should be part of the college's mission statement. It is a thing we must all do with each of us doing the part that makes sense for us to do.

For those prone to say "it's not my job," whose job is it? If the chemistry student cannot find the chemistry literature or the psychology student cannot find the psychology literature, whose job is it to remedy that? It is our job.

Having probably alienated 75 percent of you who have read this far, let me begin to assuage the injury. First, you aren't bad, evil, derelict or anything like that if your students lack this skill. It is a new thrust in education and most of us have not switched over to it yet. Next year you'll be derelict; this year you're still O.K. Second, it will not require much of your time. It is the cumulative effect of many, each putting in a little bit, that makes the difference. In fact, the skills themselves are fairly simple and easy to teach with mastery coming from practice.

The process or program by which we imbue these skills is generally called "bibliographic instruction" and there are hundreds of right ways to do it. What follows is the way one college does it. As you read, please note that no great burden is placed on any one individual and yet the program works. Administrators: please note that it doesn't cost much.

Columbia-Greene Community College has about 1000 FTEs and about 1500 students. Each year about 300 students are instructed in a formal mini-course and many more receive bibliographic instruction in various other ways. We'd like to increase the numbers and we are working on it. Our aim is to instruct them all.

As you enter our library, you see 35 in-out trays stacked on a table. Each tray holds a different research guide in multiple copies. There are guides to the card catalog, bibliographic citation, and other such general areas, as well as specific guides to reference materials in various disciplines. Students may pick up gratis or faculty may dispense them in class. Each guide has been tested repeatedly on actual students for clarity and usefulness.

Each year the library offers multiple sections of a mini-course. The course is completely voluntary and it is free. It is pass/fail but nothing ever appears in a transcript either way. Each section meets five times for about 30 minutes each time, thus each student gets about 2½ hours of actual instruction. These sections are scheduled at times convenient to most students. A student wishing to take the course merely shows up at the first meeting of a section and is signed up.

At each meeting the student is given a slide/lecture presentation on one aspect of library research and has a homework assignment. For example, the first meeting covers bibliographic citation and the card catalog. For homework the student must find two books on the assigned subject and give the correct bibliographic citation for each. Further meetings cover the reference

collection, periodical indexes and abstracting services, bibliographies, and then all these things wrapped up as steps in researching a paper. By breaking the course into five meetings each topic has a chance to "sink in" before the next is introduced.

The library is able to offer the mini-course because all it takes is about five person-hours of staff time per section, about half of which is spent checking the homework. The materials took about 80 person-hours to make up and that was done about five years ago. Updates require a few hours a year. In fact, the mini-course probably saves us time because we are instructing in blocks of 25 students instead of the one-to-one instruction to the same number that would otherwise be required. We view this as one of the most important things we do.

Students take the course for several reasons. One reason is that it is a good course and helpful to them. That "word" has spread. Another reason is that it is not difficult and in fact a common comment is "I never knew using a library was so easy." The biggest reason is that our teaching faculty and advisors push the course. They have become convinced of the value of the course, and they do their part to see the students benefit by it. Faculty recommend the course. They make library assignments and point out to students that the course will help with those assignments. They offer credit for taking the course, e.g., 10 points toward the final grade.

Students taking the course are asked to list any faculty they would like notified. Upon completion of the course these faculty are notified and the role book is kept on file for future semesters. Students receive no credit if they did not make all five meetings or if they did not do all assignments. Incorrectly done assignments are returned until the student gets it right. Accurate recordkeeping insures that the faculty can depend on us for accurate and timely reports on the students.

The effort continues beyond the research guides and the mini-course and, here too, teaching faculty are the key. If the students feel that only the librarians think the library is important, they will not learn to use it. Our faculty make library assignments. They often instruct in the tools of their particular fields, e.g., a chemistry teacher may instruct on the use of Chemical Abstracts. And finally, teaching faculty make visible use of the library themselves. Students see our faculty in the library and are presented in class with pertinent materials faculty point out were found in the library.

What makes our program work is not any particular ability we have or method we use. We have no unique skills and there are hundreds of methods that would work as well or better than ours. What makes our program work is the widespread commitment of the program. The student is surrounded by people who demonstrate that they think library skills are important, and who insist that students be able to find what they want or need to read. It is a way of life.

A graduate of William Paterson College of New Jersey, Mr. Ettelt holds an M.L.S. from Rutgers University. He was formerly reference librarian at the SUNY College at Brockport and has been director of the Columbia-Greene Community College Library since 1975.

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INSIGHT

1983-84

CALL FOR PAPERS

Faculty of the community colleges of the State University of New York are invited to submit articles for inclusion in **Insight,** an annual collection of articles on teaching and learning by faculty of the community colleges. The publication is co-sponsored by the SUNY Faculty Council for Community Colleges and the University's Central Administration Office for Community Colleges.

Subject: Analysis, interpretation, research or reporting of innovative philosophy, programs and techniques used in teaching community college students.

Length: About 2,000 to 3,000 words (manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced).

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